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PRESENT-DAY CHINA







RAW MATERIAL FOR CHINA'S INDUSTRIAL FUTURE

PRESENT-DAY CHINA

A NARRATIVE OF A
NATION'S ADVANCE

BY
GARDNER L. HARDING
Author of "Tsingtao: Key to What?" etc.

Illustrated



NEW YORK
THE CENTURY CO.
1916





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Published, May, 1916

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT


TO
MABEL HARDING
WHO, THOUGH NO AUTHORITY ON THE
CHINA QUESTION,
ALONE MADE THE WRITING OF THIS BOOK
WORTH WHILE



FOREWORD


When I arrived in China in May, 1913, constitutionalism was at the height of its power, the one seemingly permanent result of the Revolution of 1911. When I left, the principal opposition party to the President, the Kuo Ming Tang, had been outlawed and destroyed, the Parliament had been broken up, the leaders of constitutionalism and of the First Revolution had lost the Second Revolution, and had left the country with a price on their heads. When I started to write this book, the republic was threatened by a monarchy; when I had finished it, Yuan Shih-k'ai had declared himself Emperor. While I was reading the proof, the monarchy move-

ment collapsed, and the republic was resumed. As it finally leaves my hands, the South is again in revolution and Yuan is fighting a formidable secession movement whose outlook is far from unpromising. I recount these various and successive somersaults merely to remind the reader that he who writes about China touches a nation that in these present days is vital with continual change. Contemporary history always looks ridiculous to the next generation; and present-day China has experienced the equivalent of a generation of change several times since 1911. In spite of these embarrassments, the privilege of writing of the mental background of a people of such incessant wakefulness and vitality is worth the journalistic risk of being out of date when your book comes out. And after all, the struggle for liberty and nationhood



which is the real narrative of this nation's advance so far is stirring enough, and potent with meaning enough for the Western World, to tempt us to consider what China has shown us now before we try to digest her next revolution.

I have attempted in the following pages to interpret the quality of mind which produced the Chinese Revolution, if not intimately at least sympathetically, to the western world. This book is an impression of people and things rather than a history of events and causes. You "old China hands" who may call my account superficial, you have your authorities and your prejudices; keep them: this book is not written for specialists. It is written with enthusiasm for Young China and with respect for Old China, and it is dedicated to those among the American and



English people to whom I know I can confidently appeal to honor Young China's long and bitter fight upward through the darkness—the darkness through which the Chinese Revolution of 1911 will always shine as a beacon light of Oriental freedom.

New York, April 17, 1916.

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PRESENT-DAY CHINA





PRESENT-DAY CHINA

I

WHAT THE REPUBLIC HAS MEANT TO CHINA


IN a crisis of history like the present time, when history moves so rapidly and with such savage strokes of sudden change, the immediate past tends to become almost mythical. In fact, a certain unreality seems to hang about everything that took place before the Great War. The iron of power is in our thoughts and understandings, and national movements toward liberty when the nation that makes them cannot protect itself from outside aggression, seem just a little irrelevant. They

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fail to stir us so deeply now that we have measured the chasm that a universal appeal to battle has cloven in the civilization of Europe.

Our state of mind is hopelessly wrong, but it will be a long time before the forces which have created it shall relax. Meanwhile it says much for our loss of perspective that the most romantically interesting event of our time, the revolution which created the Republic of China, has drifted up-stage behind the terrible drama of Europe at war to a place where it already appears half myth and half failure.

Certainly, to our current judgments, that state of mind seems mythical, I admit, in which people could have spoken of this event, of so little military importance, as the "French Revolution of Asia." And its miraculous success, the abrupt transformation of the old-



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est and most conservative monarchy in the world into a republic with a Socialist president—how stunning have been the subsequent reactions with which history has restored the balance after such an enormous anti-climax. To those who look at China from abroad, the failure of the Revolution seems overwhelming. Where, they ask, are the leaders that created it, where is the Parliament they established, the national party they built up, the free press through which they spoke to the people, the visions of social reform, of equality for women, of popular education, and above all, where is that high-spirited campaign of rights-recovery from the foreigner with which the leaders of the early Revolution came nearer to making the Chinese consciously one people than has ever been done before?

The answer is that the leaders of



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1911, the men of the Sun Yat-sen party, are again conspirators before the State as they had been for fifteen years before 1911 itself. Their republic has been replaced by a government which is not so liberal as a constitutional monarchy, but which still pays them the reluctant tribute of clinging to the name and the form of republican institutions at the very moment when Yuan Shih-k'ai is doing his utmost to repeat the *coup d'état* of Louis Napoleon.


The two houses of Parliament and the eighteen provincial assemblies which carried the idea of political representation deep into the minds of the people, are to-day only memories; the press, that enormous crop of newspapers which sprang up in every quarter of China, extravagant, untrained, but spreading seeds of education and stimulating the growth of public opinion



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throughout the literate classes of the people, and by the inevitable contagion of the time deep into the minds of the illiterate, too—has been reduced within limits thoroughly docile and respectable. Women no longer figure in Chinese public life, social reform is nowhere an issue, and the heavy hand of the Government is laid on the hundred and one other insurgencies of youth and radicalism which gave to China during 1911 and 1912 an immense and attractive vitality that caught and held the imagination of the world.

I am a partizan of the Revolution. But in asserting that the fine achievements of the Revolutionists have been broken at the hands of the personal despotism of Yuan Shih-k'ai, I am not invoking sympathy for these men, nor am I trying to excuse them for their many fatuous blunders of overconfidence and



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their priggish notions of governing a country like China by that narrow theory-ocracy which brought about their humiliation and downfall as soon as a master of intrigue like Yuan Shih-k'ai felt strong enough to challenge them. I am not concerned with their achievements. I have spent the years since the Revolution looking for those achievements, and even when I was in China, a whole-hearted supporter and a close friend of many of the Revolutionary leaders, I realized what an insurmountable task I would have to face in telling an Occidental audience what the Revolution had done. To have inspired a people with the sense of a national cause, to have shown them for the first time in their history a patriotism worth dying for, to have created among an ancient and democratic race an intense desire to be democratic along modern



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standards, and to have erected a scaffolding on which a great nation might be built in harmony with the liberal plans of the modern world—all this is not “doing” anything in the sense that concrete achievements embodying it can be brought forward as a test against the materialistic formulas of the Western world. But if the Chinese Revolution has failed, its failure is worth emulating by the peoples whose governments run smoothly over the indifferent minds of a sluggish people. I do not believe that it has failed, for I do not believe that it is finished. But I shall be content in trying to tell what the republic has meant to China if I give you not a test of success or failure, but the quality of mind which produced that republic, and how far that quality of mind is representative of and has been shared in by the masses of the Chinese people.

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The Chinese Revolution was a glorious failure. And in nothing is either its glory or its failure more apparent than in its military phases. The Revolutionary army was beaten when the truce was called at Shanghai in December, 1911; and for all my prejudices in favor of the Revolutionists, I have never been able to believe that they would have been successful against the trained soldiers of the North had that conflict gone on. But they had shown the world, and far greater than that, they had proved to themselves that the best blood of the Chinese people was willing to die rather than that the Revolution should not be accomplished.

It is not safe for any nation to pride itself on the absolute success of past revolutions. We Americans can derive the most chastening reflections about how far our revolution against England



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was successful by reading General Upton's "Military Policy of the United States," the first courageous book in American history which dares to combine with the glory of our boastfulness and of our defiant courage at attempting such a revolution the actual failure of our arms. Nor could the French Revolution have appeared to the French in 1816 as anything like the military success which we believe to-day it really was. It is the inspiration of a revolution which makes it an integral part of that nation's history; given that inspiration, real success is certain. And nobody can deny that the Chinese Revolution for all its military failure was followed by the Chinese Republic, a régime which represented and will always represent the most effectual and dramatic break with the past ever made in Chinese history.



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The fighting along the Yang-tse River during the first revolution, especially at Hankow, has never been properly described, because no Chinese historian has yet written it in a form available for Western readers. But unquestionably the splendid courage of the Revolutionists, many of them green, untrained boys who had never fired a rifle before in their lives, showed Yuan Shih-k'ai that although he might defeat the South, it would take a long and sanguinary campaign in which the loyalty of his own troops could not always be relied upon to stand the strain, especially as they were fighting only for the none too certain fleshpots of Manchu tyranny against the infectuous desperation of a newly awakened Chinese patriotism.

That patriotism was as admirable as it was novel. In the early days of the



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campaign, several companies of Southerners arrived without arms, and rather than wait for them, they went into battle unarmed, aided in the charge on the Hankow railway station, and got rifles and ammunition by driving the Northern regulars out. The foreign nurses and doctors had the greatest difficulty in keeping seriously wounded men in the hospital. Scores of them escaped and returned to the firing line again. Chinese mission school students in Canton and other Southern cities, who formed the famous "Dare to Die" corps, fought in the ranks beside artisans, coolies, and professional soldiers; and a never-to-be-forgotten band of Chinese nurses from Shanghai which arrived on the scene three days after the fighting commenced, worked incessantly on the open battlefields and in a roughly furnished tea hong in the Russian quarter of Han-

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know day and night, going without food for twelve hours at a stretch, and having the narrowest escapes from death and worse at the hands of the savage Northern soldiery.

If there is anybody who doubts that there was a military side to the Chinese Revolution, let him read this account by a missionary eye-witness of a crucial day's fighting toward the end of the campaign at Hankow:


The battle at Kilometer Ten was a splendid exhibition of gameness and pluck on the part of the rebels. Although they were outnumbered two to one by the trained forces of Imperialists in front of them and were subjected from the flank to a racking cross fire from Admiral Sah's war-ships, they held their ground until nearly five hundred had been killed and fifteen hundred wounded. At last they were compelled to retire. Their ranks were broken but there was no panic. The advance of the Imperialists was a splendid justification of the training which the Northern troops have received under European instructors. Ten thousand strong they



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crossed into the rebel territory during the night and attacked the entrenched rebels at daybreak Friday morning. These were behind well-planned fortifications and had little to fear from the attack. It was the guns of Admiral Sah's fleet that finally decided the day against them. Sah's eight ships approached the rebels' position soon after the advance of the Imperial troops began, but did not fire a shot. After a little while the eight ships finally silently retired as if they had decided not to participate in the engagement. Later they returned, this time ready for business. The range was short and the guns mercilessly poured in shells upon the rear of the rebels' position. The slaughter was appalling. The rebels replied ineffectively and were finally silenced. Gun boats drew nearer and the revolutionists were compelled to retire. The Loyalists, whose losses were slight, advanced on the abandoned trenches in splendid order under cover of the ships, capturing fifteen field guns and taking many Republicans prisoners.


But the rebels were not yet satisfied. They returned to the fray in the afternoon, bringing reënforcements, fresh field guns, and maxims. They advanced at double quick, cheering like eager schoolboys. They attacked the Royalists vigorously, but the fight was one-sided. The



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trained Imperialist soldiers racked the armed rebels in front of them with their rapid firing guns and modern rifles, but the rebels held their ground gamely, but were ultimately compelled to withdraw. They saved their field guns and carried off their wounded.

At daybreak five thousand revolutionists attacked the Imperialists immediately westward of the Concessions. A vigorous engagement ensued and the rebels recaptured the main railway station. They also captured a Maxim gun and field gun. The Imperialist lines then were reënforced by three thousand men at noon. On their spirited advance in a movement to out-flank the rebels, hundreds were killed and wounded on both sides, and a large additional block of buildings had to be taken over by the Red Cross, for the increasing batches of wounded soldiers from both sides. The Rebels showed reckless courage, which was certainly their main asset; one of them stood for an hour, in an exposed position within range of the enemy, waving a flag and calling on his comrades. They charged in close formation, facing unflinchingly the deadly Maxims, disregarding cover, and firing without stopping to aim. The Imperialists probably inflicted ten times the losses they sustained but the Rebels were their match if not their masters in sheer




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courage. The one idea of these Southerners seemed to be to go forward at any cost. . . .”

The point is not that the Chinese first discovered courage in 1911. When properly trained they have always been splendid fighters. It was General Gordon who came to China to put down the Taiping rebellion during the middle of last century who said that he had never in his life seen hand to hand fighting of such reckless determination as he saw among the Chinese. What the Chinese discovered in 1911 was a national spirit. The fighting which gave it its peculiar inspiration, the inspiration of all revolutions, was the fighting of men and boys who dared to go untrained and unprepared into battle for an idea.


That is the kind of courage for which the Revolution has stood in China, and it is still a well of emotional power for which the Chinese may draw the next



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inspiration in their struggle for freedom. The Second Revolution of the summer of 1913, though a tragic and hopeless event from the start, was full of this courage.

One instance will show its quality. The city of Nanking, the intellectual capital of the South, wavered for some time during the Second Revolution on account of the presence in the city of troops of several factions who had not cast their lot with the "Punish Yuan" uprising. Ultimately it went over decisively against the Government, and three armies from the North came down to besiege it. There were in the city considerably under ten thousand troops, while the besieging armies numbered well over twenty thousand. The best known troops in the city, who controlled the operations, were the now famous 8th Hunan regiment. By the time the



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siege really began the revolution was crushed and the defenders of the city faced almost certain capture or death, and considering the characters of the armies against them, both. They held the Northern armies off for more than three weeks, during which desperate fighting occurred almost every day. During this time they had the city absolutely at their mercy. They were responsible to no one, they had no hope of future relief and no fear of future censure. And yet during the whole siege the life of the city went on under their protection. They kept the electric lighting system going during the thick of the bombardment, they took not a single thing from the wealthy shopkeepers or the poor stall and bazaar merchants for which they did not pay a fair price. And as honorably as they kept the city so did they fight. Eight



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times they were driven off Purple Mountain, the hill which commands the city from just outside the southeast gate, and seven times they recovered their ground. When they came down the hill they brought the breech-blocks of their guns, and when they went back again they put them in and turned their fire once more on the enemy. Their desperate courage thinned their ranks terribly. When the city was finally captured, there were too few of them to make an effective resistance, but they never surrendered. A body of them escaped into the hinterland up the river, the shortest way home to Hunan.

When the government troops got into the city, there was nobody in Nanking but who saw the ironic contrast they made with the Revolutionists. Chang Hsun, the principal general, gave over the city for three days to loot and plun-



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der, and when I walked down the famous five-mile-long main street of Nanking on the third day, there was not a shop but what had been broken open, smashed up, and cleaned out. Rich or poor, republican or loyal, private or government, made no difference. The post and telegraph offices suffered worse than the rest, and the customs building was burned to the ground. At the end of the third day they began on the women. Fires were started here and there, and Manchus among the soldiers started talk of a massacre to avenge the extinction of the Manchu quarter in 1911. Only the presence of some regular troops and the increasing anger of the Japanese at the slaughter of three of their nationals and the looting of all the Japanese shops, brought this avenging army to a halt.

I do not mean to give the impression


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that Northern soldiers as a whole are anything like the half-savage mercenaries which Chang Hsun brought down to the sack of Nanking. They, too, have learned something from the Revolution. They have shaved off their queues with the rest of the official classes of Peking and the Northern towns. The national spirit is witnessed to them in the Government so ably consolidated and centralized under Yuan Shih-k'ai, and they have a loyalty to a Chinese government which they never wholly held for the degenerate Manchus. On the whole, they are long-limbed, clean-living men who could give a splendid account of themselves and their awakening nation in the desperate conflict which may come at no distant day with Japan. In such a war the men who fought each other so gallantly at Hankow would fight side by side for a na-



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tional cause in which the whole country would be prepared to spend its last ounce of strength. When the Japanese fleet appeared before Canton in '95, the Cantonese governor made the characteristic reply to their challenge to battle that the Peking government had got them into the war, and the Peking government could get them out. The sentiment of Canton to-day, and of the whole Republican South, is best expressed in the words of Liang Chi-ch'iao, the dean of Cantonese reformers, uttered during the Japanese crisis of last spring when he was Minister of Justice. It was the Republican spirit that spoke when he said: "Better be shattered, and be shattered as a piece of jade, than be preserved whole as a common brick tile!" In no language could "Death before dishonor" be more defiantly expressed.



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The political career of the Chinese Republic, while there was a real republic, was quite as splendid and entirely as unsuccessful as its military career. It was a series of inspirations, improvised upon a complete but tremendously vital confusion of ideas. The first and most remarkable inspiration of all was the Republic itself. It amazed no one more completely than the little band of "experts" on whom we depend for most of our knowledge about China. Not being able to imagine it, they utterly refused to believe it; and for weeks after the Republicans were actually in control of more than half of the nation, the leading foreign newspaper in China was referring in its headlines to "the Revolt in Hupeh."

The clue to the Republic is that it was an imaginative inspiration. A constitutional monarchy would have left the



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people cold. A Chinese emperor would only have been another dynasty. But a people's government required the coining of a new word; and out of the same mint there poured a flood of strange and inspiring ideas. The Chinese people may be an enormous and a sluggish and an illiterate people, but there were very few of them living near any of the centers of population who did not hear of and were not stirred by the passing of the Manchus and the dramatic substitution of a Republic of the Chinese people. Fanned by vast numbers of pamphlets, the text-books of revolutions in all ages, excited by thousands of newspapers which sprang up almost over night, the people reacted to the new régime with a vitality which the Republicans themselves never controlled and only imperfectly understood. Students and idealists that they were,

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however, they realized that the current of revolution which swept into their hands during October and November of 1911 every large city and every provincial government south of the Yang-tse River, as well as most of the larger cities in the apathetic and conservative North, was an impressive testimony of popular support. And they grasped the opportunities of their time with an imaginative fervor which held the attention of the nation and of the world at large wholly spellbound.

Three successive provisional parliaments met at Hankow, Shanghai, and Nanking respectively within the space of four months. And before the last one, Sun Yat-sen, the man who had been an exile for more than fifteen years, who had gathered up the strands and who had filled the purse of the Chinese Revolution in every country in the





BATTERED REVOLUTIONISTS
Some of the patients of Dr. Mary Chang—on the right—most of them treated on the field. Convalescing at this Russian tea house at Hankow; hence the Czar's soldiers

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world, who had been summoned around the world from London to the premature realization of his dreams—this man, a self-styled Socialist, a Christian, a man from the lowest ranks of the people, was inaugurated as the first president of the Chinese Republic. It was not statesmanship. It was supreme “bluff”; or, in other words, it satisfied to the highest degree the imaginative possibilities of the situation, as Yuan Shih-k’ai, the government official, has never satisfied them and never can satisfy them with all the ermine and gold of his hoped-for imperial state.

Deeply imaginative also was the renunciation of Sun Yat-sen, an act which will always remain, as the London “Times” cordially greeted it, as one of the most whole-hearted instances of altruism in history. His procession to the ancient Ming tombs, the

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resting place just outside Nanking of the last dynasty of Chinese emperors, stirred deeply the history-loving Chinese with the immense moment of the restoration of Chinese government, after a space of more than two hundred years, again into the hands of the Chinese people.

This is the quality of mind which brought about the Chinese Revolution, which created the atmosphere in which thousands of young Chinese were eager to give up their lives for as worthy an ideal as that for which any soldier is fighting to-day on the battlefields of Europe. Patriotism, nationalism, call it what you will—it is with us a potent delusion to evil as well as an inspiration to the good—with the Chinese it is the one fundamental contribution of the Republic which no subsequent history, however humiliating to the Republi-



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cans, can make less significant or splendid to the Chinese people.

There is no need to trace their failure through one inept, unsound judgment after another to the hardly undeserved humiliation to which their utter confusion of ideas and the complete condescension they paid to their danger from their enemies have brought them. The best example of it, though not the most creditable to them, was the undermining and destruction of the Parliament of 1913.

A cabinet crisis of the summer before had deprived the Southern party of the share it had been ostensibly granted in the Peking administration. Their breach with the President had been widening steadily ever since, and the advantage lay entirely with the President through his vigilant control of the treasury and the army. Against these, and

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against a solid executive responsible to and dominated by Yuan Shih-k'ai, they staked the influence of a free parliament through whose control they intended to wrest the central power from the President and vest it in themselves. In the first popular elections China had ever seen, they won control of this Parliament. It was an irregular and a corrupt election according to ideal standards, but the decision did satisfactorily register, nevertheless, the mind of the politically interested elements of the Chinese people.


The new Parliament assembled in Peking in the spring of 1913. But even before it assembled, the emotions of both sides had been strained already almost to the breaking point. On March 20, Sung Chiao-jen, the most brilliant political leader of the Southern Nationalist party, the Kuo Ming Tang,



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had been shot and killed in the Shanghai railway station, just as he was waiting for the night train for Peking. His mission in Peking, the whole country knew, was to organize the new Parliament into the kind of political force which would make itself felt at the President's palace; and there is little doubt now, taking into consideration the direct evidence in the case and the broad probabilities of the situation, that if Yuan did not actually instigate his murder, at any rate he knew of it and gave it his consent.

The result of his death was profound, and we know now that bands of young men all over China began making plans at once for the Second Revolution they believed absolutely inevitable. Into this already heavily charged atmosphere, there entered another enormous point of contention in the Six Power



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Loan. While America withdrew from the consortium of bankers on account of the dependent position in which they were attempting to place the Chinese people, the other powers determined to overcome the objections of Parliament by lending directly to the President. The transaction took place at three o'clock in the morning of April 27, and placed in the hands of the President the administration of \$125,000,000, and, what was much more material, the firm knowledge that he was the "best bet" of the legations against the parties of constitutional government.


I sat in the galleries for many days and watched the proceedings of the first and only Parliament of the Chinese Republic, which was summoned under such ill-starred auspices. Its failure was assured from the beginning, but with the characteristic heedless idealism of the



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Southern Republicans, it cordially assisted in its failure in almost every way possible. It spent three weeks electing a speaker. It devoted a score or more of sessions to the sole business of asking the President or one of his representatives to explain the "constitutionality" of the Big Loan, and in abusing and insulting whoever was sent down to make the explanation. I have seen the secretary of the august Senate telephoning to the President that he was expected to come down and give an account of himself "that afternoon and no later," amid the most enthusiastic legislative cheers. Unfortunately, Yuan Shih-k'ai's gout was particularly bad that summer, and he never left the palace, even when he was impeached by a large majority of both houses.

Deterrents to business were infinite. Both houses had passed an absurd rule



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that a quorum constituted half the members, and the obstructionists of the President's party used this effectually to clear the hall in the midst of debates, and to keep both bodies idle for days at a time. No legislation was passed; for when the inquiries about the loan ceased, the impeachment-of-the-President agitation began. And meanwhile a large committee was appointed to draft a Constitution. At their first meeting, this committee voted that the chairs, table, inkstands, and brushes they used should be carefully guarded and preserved for posterity. History must ignore them, however, for within a month they were outlawed from Peking.


Both houses were crowded with men of the greatest ability; but, like other features of the Chinese Revolution, their futility in results, hemmed in as they were by the ultimate and necessary



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hopelessness of their situation, cannot be taken as a fair clue at all to their real services to the nation. Their time was as brief as it was hectic. With the outlawry of the Kuo Ming Tang party after the tragic futility of the Second Revolution, Parliament had ceased to exist by the time that Yuan was inaugurated permanent President. He assumed this office on the 10th of October, the second anniversary of the Revolution whose leaders he had outlawed, and whose principles he had so patiently undermined and overthrown.


On the Chinese people, the effect of the failure of the Parliament of 1913 was bewildering; and Yuan Shih-k'ai has had his way since then with highly respectable bodies appointed by himself, and called by various names of uniform dignity and pious purpose. But there is no heart in such a government, and no



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popular enthusiasm for it, save only for the brilliant men the President has from time to time gathered around him in his cabinet. But for its splendid defiance to Japan, the atmosphere of the present régime is an intensely practical one. The reaction is precisely what the unassimilable heroics of the revolutionary quality of mind have produced. It is the inevitable swing of the pendulum away from the instability of the revolutionary period.

But to admit that reaction is politically supreme is not at all to say that reaction, even constructive reaction, today represents the fervent desire of any large section of the Chinese people. It is insurgency, bold experiments with new ideas, the release of fresh energies and unprecedented ambitions, which still sum up the underlying mood of present-day China. To understand



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this we have only to turn to some of these insurgencies themselves, to touch sympathetically the changing life of the Chinese people. The substance of the change is shadowy. But that its inspiration is vivid and profound in a manner wholly beyond the powers of mere political fluctuations will, I hope, be made clear in the chapters which follow.

II


THE WOMAN'S PART

THE Chinese Revolution struck many chords in the American heart of generous and romantic sympathy. It was the more stirring because it was so completely unexpected; and in some respects it was not only unexpected but almost inconceivable. Such above all was the part taken in it by women. The history of what women did in the Chinese Revolution has never been written, and by most foreigners it has never even been imagined. We heard, for instance, of "regiments" of Chinese women getting measured for men's uniforms and going up to fight at Nanking and Hankow.

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We heard of turbulent crowds of women in enthusiastic meetings flinging their jewelry on the platform for the war chest of the revolutionary cause; we heard of women bomb throwers, of women spies, of women members of the "Dare to Die" corps, and of a dozen other picturesque and spirited activities with which women contributed a new and spontaneous energy to Chinese life during 1911 and 1912.


But of the leadership which gave these things an interpretive relation to the Chinese people as a whole, we did not then have, and we hardly now have, any direct information at all. There was such a leadership, created in individual women, and in groups of women by the vivid and infectious atmosphere of the time. But it was so perfectly spontaneous on the part of the women who responded to it, and its ef-



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fects were so obscured by the broader strokes of the political revolution that we have never identified them sympathetically through names or personalities. They are well worth a better acquaintance.

Let me tell you, for instance, of Dr. Mary Chang, a little Chinese doctor from Canton, who met one of the emergencies of the Revolution with a spirit that was wholly typical of the time. When the Revolution broke out Dr. Chang was attached to the Chinese hospital in Shanghai. Like all the revolutionists, she was caught unawares by the accidental bomb explosion in Hankow, on the 9th of October, which prematurely gave away the Southern plans and committed the conspirators to the necessity of making their fight then or being extinguished by the now alert and thoroughly informed Government.



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The Red Cross belonged to the Government, and her application to their headquarters in Shanghai was met by the natural pretense, so dear to the Chinese heart, that there was "no trouble," except such as she might help to make. Thus challenged, she proceeded to make some trouble. She called a meeting of the women in Shanghai who would volunteer to go to the front at once as Red Cross nurses. The meeting was called at a day's notice, yet almost one hundred women attended it. They included her own small staff of nurses, some women medical students, and a group of other girls and women mainly from the mission schools, who appeared spontaneously like the "unnamed ones" of the French Revolution in answer to the national emergency. A day passed after the meeting and on the next morning a group of between thirty and forty

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nurses were ready. Uniformed, after a fashion, and equipped with surgical instruments, bandages, medical stores and such other necessities as could be hastily gathered, they started for wherever the battlefields might be. Unfortunately, they forgot food, and for almost thirty-six hours after arriving near Hankow they lived on cake, which was all that was left in one of the foreign missions near the city, and a little tea.

But although they did not find food, they found work in plenty. The regular soldiers from the North, although outnumbered in the early days, shot much straighter and did much more execution than did the untrained and undisciplined Southerners. Serious casualties ran at times into hundreds every day, and although there was foreign assistance, notably the surgeon and his





MISS TANG CHÜN-YING

President of the "Chinese Suffragette Society," small in numbers but in purposes much of what its name implies.
Taken in Peking winter costume




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helpers from a Russian gunboat stationed at Hankow, the work actually upon the battlefields had to be done by this little band of volunteers, as untrained and as poorly equipped in their way as the soldiers to whom they were administering. They rode on little ponies about the country from one shifting battlefield to another, performing not only first-aid, but serious operations of all kinds on desperately wounded men. With the crude and meager kit she carried slung over her pony Dr. Chang alone performed over one hundred amputations in the three days around the battle of Kilometer Ten. Several of her nurses were wounded; and they were all badly scared. But none of them deserted. They stuck to their work through the desperate days of their cause, through defeat, through humiliation, and

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through the burning of the city of Hankow by the Northerners, which almost amounted to a massacre. They showed the world as nobly as any of their soldier-comrades the true quality of Chinese fighting courage.

I met Dr. Chang when I was in Shanghai just two years after this all happened. She was then in charge of the Shanghai Chinese Hospital just off the Bund of the Chinese city of Shanghai. It was at the time when the revolutionary parties were facing the political crisis which led to their desperate stand in the Second Revolution and subsequently to the expulsion of most of the revolutionary element from the country. Things were not settled. Her little hospital had been running for five years on funds which were always precarious but which then were dwindling before the rising tide of the com-



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ing reaction. Yet her experience in the ardent period of revolutionary hope and enthusiasm was as fresh to her as if it had been yesterday. She told of it in short, ejaculatory sentences, sentences that were like herself riding on her little, Mongolian pony across the battlefields.

“Never had I heard guns before that time,” she said, “yet we were the only ones who could go help—and we go.” (Her English, in spite of her long training in mission school and medical college, was still quaint and fragmentary.) “Oh, we were so angry,” she went on, “because the Red Cross in Shanghai say, ‘Those men you call rebels only thieves and robbers—bad men—they will not be grateful.’ But we know. They were our brothers, our patriots, our heroes. We *must* go help. But *ai*, such terrible things I never have

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seen. I have no rubber gloves with me, yet many times we find wounds left two, three days: I must cut away—you know—terrible things. If I have one small cut on my littlest finger, nothing would save me. I do not have; you see, here I am still.”

I wish I could begin to put her vivacity into this picture, especially her restless slits of flashing eyes, and the gestures that began at her elbows and shook down to the tips of her fingers. “Every time I make an operation,” she said, “I must make my courage strong again. But never was I so happy. I start new society—White Heart Society—because they would not let me be Red Cross. And the soldiers call me Miss White Heart. And all of them when they come to the hospital and begin to get better make me stand in the middle and take picture of all their wounded

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bodies—you see?—some of them have arm or leg gone, some worse, but all of them, they smile. They know they fight for China. And when such men have fought together for our country—coolies, students, old men, young men, men of all the provinces—that was one thing that make our revolution great to see.”

Dr. Chang was a Christian; not only that, but as sincere a Christian as she was a patriot. She said, for instance, “I think God help me very much,” so unaffectedly and with such gentle dignity that I can only think now of the nursing sisters in Europe as saying it with more perfect grace and understanding.

When I came to go, this spirited little pioneer insisted on driving me to my next destination in her little pony-trap, an outfit perfectly suitable to her per-

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sonality, but which defied all the conventions of Shanghai, past and present. That was my last view of her, sitting erect, crying "Hi! Hi!" to clear a passage through the tangled, staring traffic of Szechuen Road, but oblivious to it all as she was erect above it. And so she passed, and not since then have I picked out again the course of her courageous, consecrated life, a life that has always seemed to me the most perfect glimpse I have ever seen of the future of Chinese womanhood.

My destination that day was to call on Miss Sophia Chang, a girl whose Anglicized name came, not as with the little doctor from Canton, from Christian teaching, but from an inspiration at the opposite pole of the world's culture—from the Russian Revolution. Miss Sophia Chang was a political revolutionist. She took her name from a

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brave Russian girl whom she had read of in her student days in Japan; and she told me in halting English but with glowing eyes, of the story of her heroine's friend, Marie Spiridonova. Miss Chang was from Hunan, where the people are not small and wiry, like the Cantonese, but large and grave, like the Germans or Russians. She was one of the original members of Sun Yat-sen's Revolutionary Nationalist party, the Tung Meng Hwei, and was the principal, and for much of the time, the only woman member on the secret committee that managed the conspiratorial part of the Revolution.

It was she who raised ten thousand dollars from the women of Shanghai in the days when ready money was so badly needed at the beginning of the Revolution. It was she who organized the meetings at which hundreds of



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women poured their jewels on the platform for the Republican cause; jewels which were not mere useless trinkets, but after the thrifty manner of the Chinese, represented through long custom the convertible savings, the currency of womankind. Beside these memorable meetings she had workers collecting in the streets and from door to door, and organized benefit performances in which local actors gave their services free to attract the theater-loving Chinese. Among the characteristic performance given at this time was a cycle of the Three Revolutions, including "George Washington, or the American Revolution," "The French Revolution and the Life of Napoleon," and the climax of the three, "The Heroes of the Chinese Revolution." A troupe of women actors in a special theater of their own was also formed—

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in which no man was allowed behind the scenes.


When I visited her, Miss Chang was directing a school for girls and women in the Hongkew district of Shanghai, a school which had been literally organized out of the enthusiasm of the Revolution. The money, that is, had come in much the same way as the money had come to support the Revolution—through patriotism and self-sacrifice and the vision of things to come. Among the teachers was one who was refreshing her mind with Chinese again after a twenty-five-year lifetime in California, her natural language being the English with a strong and rather slangy American accent that she had come to speak, in spite of the faculty, at the University of California.

Among the subjects on the curric-



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ulum at this school, which had something over three hundred students of all ages, were English, syntax and literature, Chinese chirography, reading in the Chinese classics, elementary courses in law and medicine, teaching, and history. Connected with the school was also an organization which bore the formidable name of the Chinese Women's Coöperative Association. At the small shop which was the most palpable reason for this organization's being was offered for sale one article of a strikingly revolutionary character. It was a hat, an object of use and adornment which the custom of staying in-doors has denied to Chinese women since the beginning of time. It was a small, round, pill-box of a hat; and though I admired it with all the fervor of one who appreciated its radical meaning, I must confess that esthetically, beside



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the dignified and glossily complicated coiffure of in-doors Chinese womanhood, it left much to be desired.

Miss Chang was a typical Chinese girl of the middle classes, not a Christian, not under any foreign influence, indeed known to very few foreigners, missionaries or otherwise, throughout the city. Perhaps the only other curious foreigner who had come visiting her before was Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, the suffrage leader, who found her through purely Chinese introduction when on her world-tour in 1912. In the monthly magazine, a very interesting periodical issued by the Coöperative Society under Miss Chang's editorship, Mrs. Catt's views and some of her articles were very liberally translated. That was the only connection I found in this typical revolutionary Chinese women's society with the supposedly in-

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terested foreign outside world. It is a characteristic instance of the isolation of the Chinese women's movement in general. Not only are most of the leaders quite typical Chinese women, rarely speaking a foreign language, except possibly Japanese, but the thought, the moving idea, is wholly natural to their own spontaneous conclusions, evolved through their own awakening self-consciousness.

I found this never more conclusively proved than on a visit to the leader of a society in Peking which bore the adventurous name of the "Chinese Suffragette Society." Miss Tang Chün-ying, the president of this society, could not speak a word of English and knew no missionaries or foreigners whatsoever—except the ubiquitous Mrs. Catt. It was an astonishing society to any one who still believes in the unchange-



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ableness of China, because in its membership and outlook, except for a small admixture of Japanese radicalism, it is wholly and characteristically Chinese.

Miss Tang had been a student in Japan and a hardy pioneer and agitator for women's reform for more than ten years before the Revolution. The Chinese Suffragette Society was a comparatively new enterprise, chiefly founded on an intense interest aroused among the women revolutionists around Miss Tang in the English militant suffrage movement. While in Peking I visited a number of schools that had been organized voluntarily and were being taught by girls from this society; and the first question invariably was, "Tell us about the suffragettes of England." One I remember in particular, where a very small woman in tight silk trousers who might have stepped

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straight out of some Chinese comic opera—that is, one of our Chinese comic operas—asked me questions about militancy and hunger strikes, and processions, and firing letter boxes and other precise points innumerable. She was in charge of a “law school,” and her adventurousness of mind was all the more apparent in contrast to her tiny feet, bound and squeezed in her defenseless childhood into a merciless conformity her mind had since outgrown. Even the Boxers could not have denied that in all respects, except her inquiring mind, she was a typical Chinese woman.

It was this young lady who explained to me the society's constitution. The constitution of the Chinese Suffragette Society was impressive. It included ten points to work for: the education of women, the abolition of foot-binding, the prohibition of concubinage and its



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result in making marriage a polygamous institution, the forbidding of child marriages, reform in the condition of prostitutes, social service to women in industry, the encouragement of modesty in dress, better terms of marriage for the sexes, leading toward marriages for love, the establishment of political rights, and the elevation of the position of women in the family and the home. To support these contentions Miss Tang started two interesting papers, one written in the language of the educated classes, and the other in the simpler vernacular of the people. When I was in Peking both of these periodicals were still running, though they were issued monthly instead of, as at first, weekly. They contained a digest of news of the movements of women abroad that was based on extremely wide reading; not only that, but



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the poems and articles which were prodigally scattered through their pages were of a very uncommon literary skill indeed.

These were almost entirely from the pen of Miss Tang herself; and certainly her personality was of the type that could freshen every page on which she wrote. It was she who introduced to China the spectacle of a body of women demanding the vote from the national legislature at Nanking. There were stories that back in her home province of Hunan she broke up a newspaper office single-handed whence had issued slanders against her good name. She was a frequent and vigorous platform speaker in Peking and Tientsin. When the Second Revolution broke out, she went at once to the center of the plotting at Hankow, was arrested, and for months the report was spread abroad





DR. MARY CHANG AND HER INTREPID RED CROSS CORPS
On the battlefield at Kilometre 10, outside of Hankow. Dr. Chang is in the Southern
military uniform



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that she had been secretly executed. Later she turned up in Shanghai, however, and then in Japan, where I believe she is now. Every Chinese revolutionist knows of her, though they do not all, I add in fairness, approve of her. But she has come as near, I believe, as the Revolution has allowed any Chinese woman to become a national figure.

Diametrically different in all her temperament to this fiery advocate of women's rights is Dr. Yamei Kin, the distinguished woman physician and protégée of President Yuan Shih-k'ai, who has several times visited the United States. Dr. Kin is a conservative; though she is a born Cantonese she is a firm partizan of the North. I found in her splendidly equipped Municipal Hospital and School for Nurses in Tientsin a genius of organization and vigorous initiative that was wholly

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worthy of the first women's hospital in China, apart from mission work, to be entirely under the supervision and control of a Chinese woman.

I found Dr. Kin, for all her conservatism, acutely conscious of her people and their needs. She, too, though she was on close terms of intimacy with the missionaries, was not a Christian. Her visits abroad had taught her the value of aphorisms when being interviewed. "China should have kept the dragon flag," she said, for instance; "for China, like the dragon of mythology, is a country which does not grow gradually, but suddenly sheds its old skin for a new one." Also, I remember this one, which I did not like so well. "The Northerners are the real Chinese; the stalwart, honest, trustworthy part of our people. Although I am a Southerner I feel that the Southern people are what you think




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of when you think of the crafty, cunning Oriental.”

At Dr. Kin's hospital—it was in the humid, germ-breeding summer when I saw it—she was caring for between one hundred and fifty and two hundred women a day; and the crowds of patient little women of all kinds and classes who were waiting so unobtrusively about the broad flagstones of her big inner courtyard gave eloquent evidence of the unique social service of this institution to the city of over a million it served alone. It was a splendid niche to be filling, a potently practical part to be playing in that constantly widening experience of her sex and her people, which, in the last analysis, can only be learned by doing.

Behind these women, the leaders, the pioneers, you can conceive of countless others, dreaming, understanding, and




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achieving a new set of experiences for the Chinese race. A Chinese girl can now become a teacher or a nurse almost without restriction, and she can aspire to be a Government student abroad, or a doctor, an editor, a civil servant, or even a social reformer at home. The invasion of social life in general, the increasing number of women's papers, not all of which have been snuffed out in the reaction, the vast increase of girl students, and the profoundly changing relation of women to the home, are all deeply significant.


One should never lose sight, however, of the characteristic Chinese strain which makes this movement like nothing else in the world.

The invasion in social life most noticeable in Japan for instance, is the flood of girls who in recent years have entered the world of business. In China



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this phenomenon is completely absent, and shows no signs of developing for years to come. Miss C. R. Soong, Dr. Sun's charming secretary, claimed to be the only woman in China who worked in a man's office, and unless other cases of purely "patriotic" employment furnish like exceptions, her claim was literally true. There are no Chinese typists, no Chinese shopgirls, no Chinese ticket takers, not any women at all, except Eurasian and foreign girls, in the endless business employments that they occupy in the Western and the Japanese worlds. The up-to-date Y. W. C. A. trains many capable stenographers and typists; but for employment under women only, as in mission schools, hospitals, and purely private office work. This taboo against women's employment is even supported by Young China; for the revolution is primarily



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one of mind, and the new opportunities it stresses for women are distinctly mental opportunities.

A more material revolution, however, has introduced Chinese women of the lowest classes to factory labor. The cotton mills of Shanghai alone employ 25,000 women and young girls twelve hours day and night, with a sixteen-hour day on Saturdays, for wages that average twelve to fifteen cents a day. The middle classes can enforce their boycott on the business world; but modern industry is catching the women of the poor in the gigantic net of economic evolution. Factories run by woman and child labor pay 57 per cent. annual profit in Shanghai, and by that door Western industrialism is entering more rapidly every year into the lives of the women of China. As yet there are no laws, either against the for-



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eigner, who is mainly responsible for these things, or for the Chinese, who are so far merely their minor competitors. There are no laws, no statistics, and hardly any general knowledge or consideration.

Now in this stratum of the national life, now in that, the pervasive hand of evolution ceaselessly continues in its enduring work of alteration in the status of women. This revolution has been no mere ephemeral effervescence of the coast cities; it has penetrated to the ultimate hearthstone of the people on whom all Chinese civilization rests—the countless millions of the peasantry. It has reached them because it possesses the only quality in the world that could reach them: it is above all a moral revolution. Consider the three great reforms in Chinese home life that have accompanied it—the crusades against

there
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the opium traffic, against foot binding, and against child slavery; one charter of freedom each for the man, the woman, and the child, but all three supremely the concern of women as keepers and conservers of the home. How terribly far from completion all these reforms are only those know who have seen the degradation and compelling poverty at first hand of the life of the mass of the Chinese people. But this much is certain: that the spirit of these reforms and the quality of mind of the Revolution, have got home to the common people in a way, be it ever so little, that will inevitably tend steadily to raise the lot of women in years to come. They have created something more nearly like a national renaissance in the moral fiber of the people than any other period of social reform recorded about China.



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Like the woman movement all over the world, the emergence of women in China is above everything a spirit of humanism, a regeneration of enduring instincts for good in both sexes, and a widening of that area of contact and understanding between men and women which inexorably grows with civilization. In their capacity for progress there are, I believe, no women in Asia like the women of China. Beside Japan, China is counted as one of the world's weak nations. But in the moral regeneration that is bringing about the emergence into modern life of her woman she is fulfilling a deeper and more authentic test of civilization than has been met by Japan in all her fifty headlong years of material progress.



III

SOCIAL REFORM

BE pleased to enter the Gate of Hope," said Captain Ho.


Our rickshaws had been trundling in and out of the mazes of little lanes and alleys just off the great trunk road leading south from the Chien Men Gate. Captain Ho was the captain of the Peking police, educated at the American Mission College, Nanking University, who had learned Northern ways and had Northern military aspirations. He was a dapper little man, with a small, bristly mustache, and could not have weighed one hundred pounds. In his flannel suit and Panama hat he looked more like an under-secretary of

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the Shanghai Y. M. C. A. than a captain of police with a record for courage and quick thinking, and with four bullet wounds in his shoulders and thigh; but as he stepped nimbly out of his rickshaw the wind lifted his flannel coat slightly, and a gleam of metal from his hip pocket showed that, bland as he looked, he was still a believer in preparedness.

We were making a tour about what I may call, for lack of a better name, the social institutions of Peking, inspecting in that intensely conservative Chinese city, the public institutions that bore witness to the very recently assumed responsibilities of an Oriental municipality.

"Of course you know what the Gate of Hope is?" said Captain Ho. We were waiting, over the customary tea and cigarettes, in a little room off the



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courtyard of the long, low, gray building, which was just like hundreds of other gray buildings throughout that part of the city, while the doorkeeper took our cards to the powers within.

“We call it the ‘Evil to Good’ institution, for it is here that women of the streets are brought from all over Peking, and it is here that they have a temporary home and refuge and a chance to live a better life. It is a very tiny institution for such a large city. There are not a hundred women here, and I estimate that there are between four and five thousand women in Peking who have to register with the police as women of the town. This does not count the enormous numbers of “little wives,” which is our euphonious name for concubines, many of whom are very young girls held in complete slavery in polygamous households.



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"The line is hard to draw, but the professional women must register at police headquarters and be medically examined. The examination is perfunctory, but on the basis of the registration we arrange many marriages, and keep in close touch with any man living on a woman's earnings. We have a tax of from two dollars a month for women of what we call the first class down to twenty-five cents a month for women of the fourth class, and this is collected fortnightly on registration. Keeping track of them is simplified by the fact that the traffic is largely concentrated on eight streets not far from here and in about eight hundred houses on those streets, each of which pays a registration fee of from one dollar to eight dollars per month, according to its class. We watch the disorder in those houses very closely. I have often



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been stationed near them, and I remember one night, when on my rounds, I took eight girls from eight different beatings to the Gate of Hope. We usually have to take them, and often it is at the risk of our lives, for though they are beaten and ill used, they are property, and the men and women who control them are often willing to fight desperately rather than lose them. Very often we bring them straight from some terrible beating or ill usage, and by the morning after they, more than likely, want to go back again. Virtually none of them comes here of her own accord, because her courage has dwindled, and also because—well, the punishments for running away, you know, are very terrible indeed.”

“Have you any ways of getting at the people who make the money out of the trade?” I asked.




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"Not many," said my friend, lighting another cigarette. "It would interfere with too many prominent people." I thought I had heard that somewhere before. "For all our polygamy, it is one of the institutions of Chinese life. We can't all afford polygamy. We do what we can. Men have been strangled in our jail for violating girls under twelve,—we have a very strict law against it,—and it is also a crime to live on a woman's immoral earnings."

We rose to greet the director, an astonishingly young man, plainly dressed in the plain, dark-blue gown of the Chinese official classes. He was plainly surprised to see a foreigner.

"You are the first foreign visitor he's ever had here," translated Ho, "and he can't understand what interests you."


We went through a long passageway hung with mottos in bold Chinese



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characters, containing invocations to virtue such as: "Industry brings content," "The tiger of passion will carry you at last to the jungle; bestride it not," and "Every woman loves a home; be grateful for this one." Between them were schedules of routine work and study. One learned that there was ethical teaching on Friday afternoons, and that the rest of the week was divided between reading and writing (many of the women are of course illiterate), lace-making, machine-sewing, cooking, and housekeeping, spinning, weaving, and basket-making. Though there was no trace of Christian influence, Sunday was given over to "recreation."

We came out into a humming, buzzing, high-studded room where thirty or more girls and women were sitting about and demonstrating to the eye the





The lecture hall platform. Under portraits of Mohammed, Christ, Confucius, Buddha, and Lao-tse upholders of any of these religions address moral discourses on separate days




Swedish drill in the open air
SCENES AT THE PEKING METROPOLITAN PRISON

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handicrafts of the schedule. The buzzing of tongues stopped at once, but the humming of the foreign sewing-machines went on with redoubled energy as these timid daughters of old China bent out of sight behind their work. Their quiet, smooth, almost expressionless faces bore little trace of their tragic story, save here and there where a tiny undersized girl sat in a corner too weak to work, or scars and welts gave vivid testimony of past cruelty. Some of these infants of eight and nine had been little dancing-girls; others represented the toll of baby shame saved by the criminal courts from a fate worse than death.

"Where do they go from here?" I asked the young director.

"Most of them marry," he answered, eager to explain. "You see, a small fee places a girl here; then she supports herself by work. So it is not charity.




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Their pictures are open to the public. When a man sees a girl he likes, he sends his middleman, as in all other Chinese marriages, and we inquire fully into his character. If that is satisfactory, we allow them to see each other. And if she approves of him, he pays us a marriage fee of anywhere between five dollars and fifty dollars, and they are married. It does not end there, however. We are in close touch with the police force, and if we hear from them that he is maltreating her, back she comes again, and he has to account to us."

"Do you let men have them as 'little wives'?" I asked; but Ho refused to translate this.

"Yes, they do," he answered himself; "what can you expect? They come from very bad lives, and even this is a big improvement. The trouble is that



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many skinflints who would like to buy girls, but do not want to pay for them, induce them to run away and come here. Then after a respectable interval they appear as suitors and get them for their fourth or fifth wives at a nominal price. That is bad, very bad, and some people who love slander say that this institution is largely supported by such men. It is n't, and when we catch one of them, we give him the full extent of the law for fooling the police. There will always be such people."

"Has this institution anything to do with the Revolution?" I asked the director, and Ho and he both joined in telling me how, if it had n't been for the republic, it would n't have been founded.

"It is part of new China," said Ho, "but we have no public opinion to help it. Not even the Christian missionaries

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know about it. But new men in the police department from the South are chiefly responsible for it. And they, like myself, received their early training at a mission college."

"Are the number of these women increasing?" I asked as we again got into our rickshaws at the gate.

"Oh, yes," Ho replied. "The thousands of students who have come back from Japan have brought with them habits which the average Chinese boy would never pick up at home in anything like the same extent. Most of the present members of parliament have studied in Japan, and although I'm an ardent Republican, and had two sons who went through the fighting round Hankow, I must confess that in this respect they're not much better than the rest."

We were rolling out along the great

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stone-flagged road that runs out toward the Temple of Agriculture.

"I 'm taking you now," said Ho, "to see the Peking Municipal Prison, the finest prison in China. It is one of the really enlightened reforms of the past régime, for which the Manchus received little credit. It handles the serious penal cases for the whole of Peking. Out of our population of somewhere near a million we usually have about five hundred prisoners, and many of them are first offenders. That's less than one in two thousand, and considering the fact that criminals inevitably drift toward a capital, it's not at all a bad record."


We turned a corner of the city wall, and came in sight of a group of buildings arranged like the radiating spokes of a wheel, with a fine administration building near the center, the whole,

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with a few outbuildings, surrounded by a low wall. From a distance it looked flat and dun-colored, like the Chinese fields around it, but going nearer, the first impression one received of the whole outfit was one of conspicuous efficiency and cleanliness.


The governor, a tall, grizzled Chinese of the older school, met us at the gate, and six different sets of soldiers popped out and saluted us on our way through the maze of buildings to the central offices. Ex-President Eliot of Harvard said a year or so ago that the Peking Prison was the most interesting thing he saw in his whole trip through China. I think the "Gate of Hope" is more interesting, but I should place this magnificent prison a close second.

Take the workrooms, for instance. In great, high-studded rooms forty yards square by a measurement I was



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curious enough to verify, there were groups of forty or fifty men working at their trade under conditions, if one considers the standard of living of the far East, almost ideal. There were big rooms for ten or more trades, including tailoring, shoemaking, woodworking, ironsmithing, bookbinding, spinning and weaving, basket-making, printing, and several others, not the least of which was market-gardening outdoors. It was strange to hear, out in far-away Peking, in a city through the streets of which I had traveled continuously for six weeks without once meeting a foreign face except in the tiny, walled foreign quarter—it was strange to hear that the majority of men who came to prison knew no trade, and that the best way to make them behave themselves like decent citizens when they got out was to teach




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them a trade. It was all what we are still vainly trying to practise at home.

At the Peking Prison they not only teach prisoners a trade, but they have an employment bureau which connects a man with a job. They segregate first offenders from old-timers and men convicted of light offenses from those guilty of heavier ones up through second, third, and fourth offenders. In fact, forgery, petty larceny, robbery, and assault and battery are the names of cell rows where convicts of kindred offenses are exclusively confined. The governor confessed that the atmosphere of specialism in crime might be rather narrowing, but it was all in the name of modernism and system.

The parole system has been introduced, and the governor has decided to stick to it. Physical drill, an innova-



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tion in any class of Chinese society, is held daily, and the setting-up exercise I saw proved that the men enter into it with appreciation and enthusiasm. But the outstanding note of the prison is cleanliness and order. The cells are large, and though doubling up is common, they are dry and clean. Electric lighted, of stone construction throughout, on high and level ground, with sanitary conveniences far better than home standards in China, the great prison at Peking is as much a lasting credit to the far-reaching social reform spirit of the Chinese as Sing Sing, for instance, where Warden Osborne's back is still against the wall, is a disgraceful witness to the complacent conservatism of America.

We went up into the cupola as the six o'clock bugle blew the signal to stop work, and from the first landing we

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could see long lines of prisoners waiting for their evening wash. They were clad in clean white suits, and they stepped briskly along to the wash-room, knowing that beyond lay supper. Supper is set out in rice-bowls, and on special occasions there are three sizes of them, a potent discrimination against unruly spirits. Up and down the long tables, with completely shaven heads (the laundry workers have to submit to this, too) moved the cooks and waiters, and as we went on up the stairs the hum of talk which mingled with the busy click of chop-sticks showed that these Chinese had granted another mercy that we still withhold more often than not in the civilized West—the mercy of talk at meals.

Up in the cupola was the assembly-room, with rows and rows of high-sided seats that enabled the prisoners to see



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the platform, but not one another. On the wall over the platform I saw five crude paintings of men with beards. In regular order, beginning at the left, the governor pointed them out as Mohammed, Jesus, Confucius (in the center), Buddha, and Lao-tsze, the founder of the Taoist faith. Thus was China liberal to all religions, and every Sunday, when the prisoners gathered here, they heard a moral discourse from some representative of one of these five creeds, with the other four to frown down upon him with united disapproval if he became too partizan.

The last thing we saw at the Peking Prison was a set of the instruments of torture with which prisoners were brought to reason in days gone by. Balls and drags for the feet, vices for breaking the bones of the hand, the terrible old, slicing knife, and, amid a host

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of other tools, two handsomely chased beheading swords with nicked and rusty blades—how wholesomely they fitted into the dusty chamber to which they were once again to be consigned away from the uses of man! Only the light bamboo is allowed to-day, and that very sparingly, at this prison; and as a testimony to the humane treatment, which I have since verified, let it be said that for more than four years there has not been a single attempt to escape. If one doubted that this is a model prison, could one have any better proof?

There was a day in Peking when the gutters of the streets ran in floods on rainy days, so that it was no unusual thing for an unwary victim who lost his footing, particularly a small child, to fall in and be drowned. The revelations and the odors on the coming of dry weather made it a veritable city of



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the damned. Since those days, before the siege, the spirit of the city has entirely changed; but even to-day the curious traveler may poke his nose into backwaters of the old capital's life, as I did the next day, and get the full stench of the unregenerate past.

The next day's trip that I made with Captain Ho included a visit to the Boys' Industrial Home (the Shih Yi Sou) and the poorhouse (the Ping Ming Yuan). The Shih Yi Sou is under the capable administration of the ministry of the interior, a thoroughly modern department of the Government, and is, in its way, wholly as creditable an institution as the Peking Prison. The 375 boys there, ranging anywhere from fifteen to twenty-one years of age, are given a thoroughly efficient trade-school education along lines that could hardly be improved in the Western world.


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They are taught tailoring, tinsmithing, printing, soap-making, cloth-weaving, hat-making, gardening, and half a score of other trades. But most important of all, they are taught under a clean, efficient, and humane system that turns out human quality, and not merely good artisans. The boys we saw about the neat, spacious, well-ventilated buildings, in their clean blue uniforms, had good, shining boy faces it was worth while going to see. And yet when they came to the institution they were beggar wretches, orphans, paupers, young pick-pockets, and incorrigibles of all descriptions. The Shih Yi Sou, tucked away in the trackless heart of this vast Chinese city, is a thoroughly up-to-date, twentieth-century institution.

The Ping Ming Yuan is hidden away quite as obscurely, but it is hidden in a shameful past as well. It is the city

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poorhouse, and as such it is a disgrace to the city that has been touched deeply with the humane movements of the Republic. Rows and rows of able-bodied young paupers, men sunk in the degenerate sloth of an idle existence, hung around the buildings. Scattered among them, with no attempt whatever at alleviation or segregation, were the aged, the blind, the crippled, the deaf, the destitute, and the dumb. From out the squalid buildings that bordered the dirty and unkempt courtyards dull, hopeless eyes and rueful, pasty faces, men, women, and children alike, eyed us without interest and without intelligence. The broken bodies of the aged and the helpless little bodies of orphans and pauper children appeared to have been cast into this place as on some dust-heap with equal callousness. There was no expert care whatsoever; only



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coolies kept them in bounds and saw that they received their meals.

We had made the tour of the buildings and were turning back when our guide said to us, "Would you like to see the lunatics?" He spoke as though he were promising us an interesting show. He pointed with a grimace to a round hole cut in the wall for a door, giving upon another set of courtyards that we had not noticed. And then I heard them. I had been hearing them for some time, I believe, but now I knew what that weird chanting Babel was. We were already almost in a state of nausea, and as I started I felt a breath of real terror. But the impulse to go was overwhelming, and we went through the little round door into the lunatics' courtyard.

I took one step inside the courtyard and then stopped. I shall never for-






A SECTION OF PEKING'S SEMI-MILITARY POLICE
Taken during Dr. Sun's visit in 1912, when the capital was friendly. Dr. Sun is in the
second row, third from the right



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get that sight as long as I live. There must have been eighty people in the courtyard, which was something like forty paces square; and every one of these people was a drama to himself. In the middle of the space there was a well, with a tin dipper on its rim, and in front of it a man stood, naked to the waist, with wildly tousled hair, making what seemed to be a speech and looking me straight in the eye. I had never wholly become used to the Chinese face, especially to that hostile, absolutely unfeeling stare it turns on the foreigner as he is going through the street.

This man turned his uncanny, vacant face on me and came walking nearer and nearer. I stood transfixed with terror. And then suddenly the whole emotional tension snapped as two or three younger men rushed out and seized his pigtail, and began to play



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horse with him, apparently jealous at his occupying the center of the stage. The crowd howled in glee as an attendant in khaki drove them off. The man sat down on the edge of the well and whimpered; and only then could I take my eyes off him and look at the others. I could hear the sound of high, falsetto singing; but could not place it anywhere, till suddenly I noticed a dark little man, with a black mustache, in a corner, a pitiful, fat, extremely sensible-looking man, who sat with his back to the crowd and sang unceasingly.

The day was a deadly hot summer day, and the courtyard was dry and blistering; yet one half-naked wretch deliberately got down and rolled in the noonday sun, moaning piteously. A guard ran over to him nervously, picked him up bodily, and carried him to a bench. He rolled off, but in the

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shade, and still moaned and moaned. Near him, and regarding us intently, was a man with a red flower behind one ear and a large leaf behind the other. Everywhere I looked, my eyes would meet a face that would at once become a vacant grin; one man put his hand to his head and crooked his knees,—he was a tall wizen old man with a face like a satyr,—asking for money in the familiar beggar gestures of the street, and grimacing horribly every time I looked in his direction.

Some were new cases, with what hope of improvement in that ghastly atmosphere no one seemed to care. And over in one corner were the women. Many of them were old, but one or two were young and pretty, and one kept putting on clothes every time I looked in her direction, one coat after another until she must have had on at




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least five. Here was a boy of eight, incurable, just come in. And round about them walked the coolie guards, grinning at their queer antics as at a game.

We stood there—it must have been fifteen minutes—without speaking a word. I had intended to take a picture, but as I folded up my camera Ho said, “Yes, for God’s sake, let’s leave them to their misery.” I can still hear the yell that pursued us as we ducked through the little round door again—a yell in which the whole eighty voices seemed to join in a fiendish chorus, and which rang through my mind throughout the journey home, and has rung in it intermittently to this day.


I left Peking for the South shortly afterward, but before I left, Ho promised to move heaven and earth to have this pitiful lot of people put under



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decent care, and wipe out the terrible blot on modern China represented by the condition of the whole institution. I am sure that he has done it, as I heard a few months ago from a friend in the Peking Y. M. C. A. that the lunatics' compound had been entirely reformed since we had visited it the year before. I believe it has been, for there is no reason why the Peking Lunatic Asylum should not be quite as good an institution as the Peking Prison.

In bringing to practical extinction within ten years the age-long national curse of the opium traffic, the Chinese have shown the unconquerable resolution which makes for social betterment. That is their true mettle, and we of the Western world, for all our boasted progress against social evils, would look long to find a moral crusade to match it in fervor *and* success. But a peep



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into a dark corner of the unregenerate past is necessary to set against this splendid endeavor. Seeing and remembering the Ping Ming Yuan of Peking, we can feel to the full the imaginative application to China of Cecil Rhodes's famous epitaph, "So much to do, so little done!"

IV

RADICALISM AND THE RADICALS

I REMEMBER the Ha-ta-men street as the place which kept me down to earth in China. The Ha-ta-men street is one of the great thoroughfares of Peking; it skirts the legation quarter and plunges through the great gateway from which it takes its name into the heart of the teeming small shop quarter of the city. After listening all day to the frock-coated students of the South playing at democratic government in their parliament, after talking to suffragettes, so-called, after lunching with a president of the Senate who spoke brilliant French and claimed to be a socialist, after listening to plans for

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internationalism, Esperanto and social reform, in a word, after touching day after day the hem of that splendid garment of moderism which this band of patriots and pioneers were trying to cut to their country's fit, it was helpful and chastening to see that nation revealed on the Ha-ta-men street in the naked reality of its common people.

The strange and tireless pageantry of that street is one of the freshest and most enduring impressions I have of China. I can see it now as it was in the evening, a great, broad, dim road thirty feet or more from curb to curb, full of little flickering lights and swarms of people and strange smells. It is four hours after sundown and still from side to side this great street is crowded with people. Under the flare of hundreds of peanut-oil lamps the keepers of the outdoor bazaars are doing a thriving




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trade. Here is a street restaurant with its twisted cakes sizzling noisily in hot pans and bowls of pungent broth and chopped meat and vegetables hustling over the crowded counter to the clamorous, quarreling, half naked mob of customers. Just beyond a man cries, in a terrifying liquid guttural, the virtues of a cold red drink which he is ladling out in cups. Across the road a little magician sits with drooping mustache and cunning eyes, and holds a crowd spell-bound at his tales of fortune read from little ivory sticks. Beside him a tall old man with a sparse, straggling beard sells American cigarettes, ten for a cent, while further along a lean young man with shaven head, in a gray robe, looking much like a Buddhist monk, draws a secular and very profitable custom manipulating white dice in and out of a brown leather bag.



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Along the dimly lit roadway rickshaws clatter swiftly, threading their way among the people by miraculous lunges from side to side. Their passengers are inconspicuous, but here and there a gaily dressed lady flashes by. Children in all stages of nakedness chase after them like little minnows in a pool. Up and down the street drift the crowds; past the bazaars and the street merchants and the beggars, countless streams of people move about in the myriad gleams of lanterns and bobbing rickshaw lights. From a mysterious house on the corner comes the shrill wailing of a Chinese fiddle, and every now and then a man walking past you will break out into unearthly harmonics in a wavering falsetto. The noise is incessant. The shoving restless crowds seem endless, and yet, with a calm like still water, women's faces looking passively



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at you from behind bazaars and an occasional doorway.

It is stifling hot, and the air is heavy with strange cooking and the humidity of half clad people, while over the silent stretches of flat roofs on either side rises the vast gate tower of Ha-ta-men, lifting its huge upturning eaves into the night with the overspreading permanence of the unchanging East. The contagious squalor of this environment, the heavy, sensuous, relaxing air which is more than a physical element in its unholy composition—it is these which bring home to a westerner the evil spell which hangs over the East. Under the cruel, upspringing, scornful lines of this tower, crouching on the wall which runs on either side as far as the eye can see, flows the life of the common people of China. And as the busy, sordid, swarming life of the Ha-ta-men brings



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to your mind the way in which these people have lived for centuries, so the un-aspiring, malignant tower above them, typifies unforgettably for you and for them the mean and alien despotism which has ruled them and crushed them and forgotten them.

Now that despotism is gone; new hopes, new ideas, and a new restlessness are abroad in the land. Schools are coming, laws are more just, and the law's penalties in prison and social institution are losing the cruel edge of the past. But of the new *idea*, what of that? Where can you see the republic, the new China, radicalism along the Hata-men street? What is there here among these medieval crowds to tell you that you are in the same country, in the same city, in the same century with a Chinese parliament? I could see nothing. And that is why walking along

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the Ha-ta-men street was a chastening experience to my warm sympathies with China's hot-blooded radicalism. It brought one down to earth, to a type of life on which the new words and the new feelings seemed to have no effect whatsoever. And I came to feel that unless I could find a sign of the New China in the Ha-ta-men street, even though that street were in the heart of the unsympathetic capital of the unprogressive North, and among the common people whose superstitions against reform were eloquent still in ghostly memories of Boxerism, I could not really believe in the Chinese revolution.


And then one night I found it. I was walking through the Ha-ta-men district with a friend who spoke Chinese, if anything more fluently than the people themselves. He had been in China thirty years, as interpreter, mining en-



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gineer, customs official, and unofficial doctor and missionary; and for the past year or so he had been spending his time in a little village where nobody could speak English and only eight people could read or write at all. When he came up to Peking it was an event; he, too, was looking for the revolution among the common people, and, being an old China hand, he did n't believe he would find it.


We came to a little lane down which the chief things noticeable were a lot of flickering lights among a silent crowd—and a Voice. The lights belonged to rickshaws of which there were a dozen or so along the wall and through the crowd, and the Voice belonged to an earnest, clean-shaven, attractive looking rickshaw man who was standing between the shafts of his old iron-tired rickshaw in the center of the crowd.



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"This fellow must have a sun-stroke," my friend was saying, when—"hold on a minute," he said, stopping sharply. " 'Min kuo, Min kuo'; do you hear that? It means republic. Look here, there is something more than meets the eye down this lane; let's go and see."

On nearer view the crowd appeared to be about half a hundred people, almost all workers or artizans, with a dozen or so women scattered among them. The edges of the crowd, that is, inside of a considerable fringe of street arabs, came and went continually, but the great majority stood still and listened; and gradually we discovered that it was n't a sun-stroke and was n't a quarrel but was that unheard of thing in China—a street speaker. And the way he talked to the people of the Ha-ta-men street was as instructive as it was amazing. My friend translated be-



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tween gasps of surprise and appreciation, for he was a keen admirer of the Chinese mind, especially when it was whetted in argument.

The rickshaw orator first got his crowd interested in himself. He told them his father had an official post but because he was not willing to pay bribes to retain it, he had been displaced by a man who was willing to purchase favors. Now his family was penniless and he was not afraid to go out and work for a living among the honest rickshawmen of Peking. He pointed the moral with rhetorical questions in finished street orator style. "But why should we be robbed with this bribery and squeeze now?" he said. "What is the use of a republic if they still want money for only taking in your card to some fat official? Should n't we have all the more under a republic a preference for char-



acter and merit instead of corruption? Don't forget it, the people are powerful now. Why should we let these crooked officials do anything they please?"


"You know," said my friend, excitedly interrupting his translation, "this is a serious business if there are any police in hearing." But it soon became more serious, for the speaker left the minor officials and began to attack the President himself.

"We have no more kings now, no more emperors. We have a president who is supposed to do what we, the people, want him to do, and yet this president issues decrees just as the Manchus did; and he says 'I decree, I proclaim,' and he expects you to say 'we tremble and obey.' But this man is not a God, he is not even a scholar, but is only an ambitious soldier, and unless we watch him and make him fear us, he will de-

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ceive and betray the people just as the Manchus did before him."

"Don't think I am angry," continued the young speaker; "I will talk these things over calmly with anybody here. I will come again to-morrow at this time, but don't tell anybody about it because I don't want to have a disturbance on the street. I might get arrested and then my father would starve." He began to wheel his rickshaw ahead of him through the crowd. His voice had been very attractive, his words well chosen. Unquestionably, he had a sort of spell over these people. But no one moved, no one asked a question. He was obviously a stranger and they were a little shy of him. Now he turned his rickshaw around and the light which had lit up his keen expressive face in the center of the crowd, disappeared. But as he went out to the mouth of the alley he




was still talking and among his last words I caught one significant phrase myself. "Kuo Ming Tang," it was, the name, already known throughout China, of the revolutionary party of Sun Yat-sen, the student Jacobins, the intellectual *sans-culottes* of the Chinese Revolution. "That places *him*," said my friend, "and he is n't the only rickshaw-man, real or pretended, who has been heard of (though I never believed it myself) working up the people's minds in the alleys and dark corners of Peking. These people had a new sensation tonight; they never heard anything like it before; and they won't soon forget it. You can't begin to realize what this sort of thing means in China. Fifteen years ago a man like that would have been in danger of his life, for then the Southern reform devils were just as despised as the foreign devils themselves. And

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there was hate right here for both a-plenty; Count von Waldersee was murdered within the sound of that rickshawman's voice on the open Ha-ta-men street. And now, on the same street, you have a crowd listening to liberalism, reform, and the republic. That's the new China. I've lived here almost thirty years, and I never saw it so vividly as to-night."


The man had gone but the crowd lingered. Long after we had gone up to our cubicles in the mission hospital on the corner where we were staying, knots of people hung about, lights flickered, and the hum of talk came up to our windows. Only after midnight was there quiet at last along this strange old street, a quiet which the squeal of a fiddle somewhere along the deserted alley only seemed to make more still. But the Ha-ta-men was a different place to



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me now. On that time-sodden street I had caught the heart-beat of the present among the common people. That queer, naïve but stirring talk had been their notice of the revolution. To me it was a sign that no corner of China, no class of the Chinese people could be sure of being without the range of its influence. If the Revolution was abroad on the Ha-ta-men street, it was abroad among the Chinese people.


This is a chapter of impressions. The intense and imaginative radicalism of Young China eludes altogether the heavy, analytical method with which foreigners in China usually try to account for it. Life on the Ha-ta-men street is strange enough, but there is a key to it which any Westerner can grasp—money. The incessant talk of the people, the confusion, the weird energy



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you everywhere see responds inevitably to this touchstone; the one paramount motive is and must be to wring a living out of the swarming land. From the lowest coolie hoeing his washed-out half-acre on a precipice to the highest official sharing his patrimony among his flocks of relatives-of-prey, the token is the same; the urge of the one toward starvation and thrift and of the other toward corruption and avarice are identical and irresistible. I have seen soldiers under fire bartering with a ragged huckster for eleven nuts for a cash instead of ten. Missionaries who have listened to Chinese street-talk all their lives say that nine snatches of conversation out of ten are about money.

This is not the key to Chinese radicalism. It is as elusive in economic basis and as hard to reconcile with material forces as was the Utopianism of Boston



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transcendentalism. Mr. Pott's young man read up on Chinese metaphysics for the "Eatanswill Gazette" by studying China under the letter C in the Encyclopedia Britannica, and metaphysics under the letter M—and "combining his information, Sir." But as the young orator on the Ha-ta-men street brought a message which the people listened to and recognized, so the student of Chinese radicalism to-day can understand something of its meaning and quality of mind by a method much more direct than mere materialistic analysis, and still avoiding the interesting error of Mr. Pott's young man.

He can go to the bringers of this message themselves. That is what I propose to do in this chapter.

I begin irresistibly with that extraordinary spirit, whose name appears in no history of the Revolution, who first


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brought home to me the real quality of the revolutionary mind of Young China, Hain Jou-kia. I met Hain in London in 1912. His headquarters were in Paris, and it was in Paris that he organized the banquet, at which Anatole France was the principal speaker, which gave the Chinese Republic its first greetings from the liberal culture of Europe. He came from a famous literary family in the far southern province of Kwangsi; and for a year, when the Chinese Republic was struggling for recognition among the world's powers, and the leaders of the First Revolution still had a fighting chance of success, he occupied a position in Paris reminding one of Benjamin Franklin. He organized the first society in Europe to promote sympathy and understanding with republican China, the Ligue Sino-Française. And in the later months of



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the year he planned another instrument of mutual understanding, a tour of members of European parliaments with republican sympathies overland to China. It was on this mission that he came to London, and, among a shoal of other newspaper men, I interviewed him at the House of Commons. I found him a man looking little more than thirty, but an alert, enthusiastic propagandist for his country's cause, a pronounced visionary and doctrinaire, but a shrewd organizer and a very convincing personality. I suppose his newness to the world of labor problems, Socialism, and free thought into which he had so lately come tilted his judgment a little, but certainly his radicalism had in it to me an astonishing tang of daring. He began to study Socialism, he said, as soon as he arrived in Europe, and he saw in it the only way by which the Orient could de-



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velop its material resources and still avoid the orgy of capitalist selfishness into which industrialism had thrown the whole of Europe. "We in China," he said, "have no nobility of blood; and, if we can help it, we're going to have no nobility of capital and industrial enterprise." He soberly told astonished members of Parliament that there was very little in Socialism that was n't in Confucius anyhow; and for his part, he was just a little "*plus avancé*." Socialism suffered from too much politics, too much compromise with legalistic quibbling; the radical democracy of the future would have an element of coöperation and an element of syndicalism in it, which merely meant that the rights of the consumer and the rights of the worker would be directly maintained by the parties themselves, without constant resource to political dickering.



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Hain Jou-kia never got his parliamentary delegation off for China. The murder of Sung Chiao-jen and the rumbling of the revolution behind the Six Power Loan spiked this as they spiked scores of other projects of liberal China. Month after month it was postponed; the money was ready at the Chinese Embassy in London; but each time a fresh crisis set the date back again. Finally, Hain Jou-kia saw the end of his party and his principles at home, canceled the arrangements and returned to China. I was the only arrangement he did n't cancel. The threat of revolution cooled the ardor of the politicians; but to a young journalist, still ardent over lost causes and to whom China's bid for freedom had already begun to seem the most stirring and potent event of the time, the opportunity was a challenge. I bought

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my ticket to China the day after the passage of the Big Loan made a southern revolution inevitable.

When I arrived in Peking the Parliament, summoned only six weeks before, had already passed into its desperate fight for existence. The talks with Hain Jou-kia I had begun in the House of Commons lobbies I continued in his little bachelor quarters outside the Tartar Wall; we went from friend to friend, from meeting to meeting in springless Peking carts and latticed carriages. I saw the men who had hoped to found a national party in China; I saw the net growing round them; I saw their movement narrow gradually but inevitably from a political opposition to a secret conspiracy against the government. One man in a palace in the Forbidden City held the strings. They never saw him, but the power he silently directed



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was all around them. He controlled the army and the treasury, and before those things their Parliament was a pawn on the board. With the treasury he bribed incessantly, with cash, with office, with all kinds of empty honors; and he raised new troops and paid the old regularly. With his army, he made secret arrests. Seven members of the Senate were arrested and taken to Tientsin. The president of the Senate refused to preside over the chamber; the vice-president, a man far less radical, took his place. Secret executions went on. The detectives were everywhere; the military courts were absolutely in the hands of the man in the palace. His power was compact, it worked on a plan, it had the legations of the foreign powers, and the instruments of domestic tyranny behind it. The radicals only had the appeal to the people. Finally they



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used it, and the world knows now how it failed them.

Add to this steady drift the reasons for the political failure of the Revolution, as I have given them in the first chapter, and you will know at what end to grasp the situation. The radicals had their backs to the wall. They had come to Peking to plan for a new régime; as Hain Jou-kia had gone to Paris to justify it before Europe. But in Peking they found Yuan Shih-k'ai completely obdurate, threatening with jealous hatred any liberal platform which diverted from him any part of the concentration of power to which he had devoted, and still devotes, the whole of his political strategy.


I did not see then that the end was inevitable; the fight was still on, the Parliament was still the center of interest in the country, and the Kuo Ming



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Tang, founded less than a year before as the united radical party of the South, was at the height of its career. The Kuo Ming Tang was more than a political party; it was a national movement, a great social agitation. In Peking its headquarters suggested the Jacobin Club during the French Revolution. Every day a meeting was held here, every day the policy of the moment was discussed in the presence of several hundred members and fixed according to the fiercest consensus of opinion, a characteristic Chinese revolutionary practice.

I remember the Kuo Ming Tang as a sunny courtyard set back from the street in the center of a cool, wide, low-roofed Chinese building. Crossing and re-crossing slantwise through the front passage and standing about in groups in this courtyard were scores of young



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Chinese, talking in informal, animated groups. The general impression was one of great color and spirit. Directly ahead was the big discussion room, crowded with Chinese flags and strings of foreign bunting, and here over a hundred members were already seated, waiting for the day's meeting. Youth had a striking majority in this gathering, and the number wearing European dress, was more than one half, the rest being in the typical long gray silk gown of the well-to-do Chinese. The buzz of continual conversation filled the place; and it was noticeable how many of the men present, often the most boyish looking of all, wore the gold and silver stars which betokened membership in Parliament. Newspapers were also considerably to the fore; a big file representing a liberal selection from the thousand and one journals that had recently sprung





A TYPICAL GROUP OF REVOLUTIONARY LEADERS
They backed Dr. Sun, who stands in front



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up all over the country, was kept in one of a row of little offices on one side, and in the center of almost every group some one held a newspaper as a brief for his argument. The informality was particularly noticeable—after the bowing and scraping you could see on the streets of the Imperial city, the bearing of these young men was more like that of American college students than of mandarins. There was very little laughter to be heard, very few smiles to be seen; the general attitude was strikingly French—very earnest, very excitable and gesticular, yet all in good poise and the best of manners.

I came to the party headquarters with Speaker Chang Chi of the Senate and while we sat in one of the many conspirators' corners over a tiny cup of tea, he told me something of the idea behind the determined little group of men who



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had brought the Kuo Ming Tang into being. He was a slight man, with a face of the North, a trifle full, with steady eyes and thick hair, young and vigorous. He had studied in Japan, and had spent four years in Paris—like Hain Jou-kia, he spoke only French to foreigners. His student-days in France had brought him into close touch with Jaurès, the French Socialist leader, and it was a little strange to reflect that this man too, a prime mover in the Revolution and now the presiding officer of the Senate, had come back from Europe with firm social democratic convictions.


I asked Chang Chi to tell me two things about the Kuo Ming Tang; what common purposes actually kept it together as an organization, and what he thought it actually meant by Socialism.

“Well, in the first place,” he answered, “Kuo Ming Tang means the



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National Party, and it is the best clue to our central object I can possibly give you. Abroad, you might be sure that such a name would mean jingoism, or at least conservatism, but it has been characteristically modern China's way to take that name for the most radical party in the country. And this is the reason. Ever since Sun Yat-sen and Hwang Hsing founded the Tung Meng Hui in Tokio in 1901, Chinese revolutionists have always recognized it was their very first task to create an appeal which would break down provincial and sectional barriers and win support to a common rallying cry from all over the country. 'Nationalism' meant then, and means now, in China, a real step in advance. In the old days China as a nation could not be said to have existed at all. In practically every war China fought during the nineteenth century



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you will find troops from one section of the country helping the enemy put down rebellion in another.

“Similarly, it was only through the absence of the slightest glimmer of patriotism that the amazing system of provincial government grew up which has made our officials a bye-word the world over for degrading corruption and self-interest. These officials only had, only have still, for the Republic has not even started its reform in their direction yet, the interest at heart of their own particular province or district: and favoritism and all the crooked ‘influences’ which determined advancement have almost always had their sanction and their safety from exposure in this narrow provincial spirit.

“Here you have the crux of all our propaganda, both before and after the Revolution,—the rallying cry for a




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united China. To have created this idea of unity and to have aroused the feeling of intense nationalism that you see to-day—that has always been the first object of our party and it is the greatest triumph of the Chinese Revolution.


“From now on China will face an entirely different set of problems. In the pell-mell confusion of the political situation here to-day, one thing is absolutely clear: that is that the real conflict in China will never again be a racial or provincial conflict; from now on it will be between the class interests of the whole nation. And just let me explain to you one thing in particular which that change means.

“First of all, it means that China must wake up with a bump to the world-wide issue of Socialism versus Individualism. How far the Kuo Ming Tang



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is affected by Socialist influences you may see from the fact that as many as fifty members of Parliament, all belonging to our party, are convinced Socialists. As an organization the Shueh Hwei Tang, as the Socialist Party is called in Chinese, is as yet one of the minor influences in politics; but as a permeating force the prominent Socialists in Parliament and out have swung the Kuo Ming Tang a long way toward a definite Socialist programme. The nationalization of mines and railways, the old Tung Meng Hui (Sun Yat-sen's original party) policy of the social ownership of the land, democratic schemes of taxation, such as the income tax, the inheritance tax, etc., free education, racial equality, and lastly the very specific wording of the Kuo Ming Tang's position on the encouragement of modern industry 'on a social, rather



than on an individualistic basis,'—all these are significant items in the party's declared and published policy which show a more than accidental drift toward practical Socialism.

"In the last revision of the Kuo Ming Tang constitution you will find Socialism boldly made one of the party's main objectives, for number four, under 'Final Aims,' reads:

"To prepare the way for the introduction of Socialism, especially in order to raise the national standard of living, and to employ the powers of the Government quickly and evenly to develop the resources of the country *for the benefit of the whole people.*"

"We could n't be much more direct than that, could we?" said Chang Chi. "But wait a minute. Here is an object lesson right before you of the way the mind of our party is working."

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A meeting had begun in the big lecture room. A tall young Chinese in a European suit of light brown silk was speaking from the platform, under the crossed five-colored flags. He spoke in groups of queer, ringing monosyllables, full of uncouth gutturals—good, close-packed Chinese oratory it was, for sharp bursts of clapping went up to him every minute or two from his keen attentive audience.

“He is a Socialist,” said Chang Chi, “and all over China men of his stamp are talking to meetings of our party. His father is a pawn-shop keeper in a small city in the South, but he laid aside a little money to get his son a good education in Japan, and now, as in the old China before the Manchus, merit and knowledge put him on an equal footing with any man in the country. We have no belted earls in China; our people




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don't know the meaning of aristocracy except what they connect with the foreign rule of the Manchus. So the side of Socialism which preaches the equality of all men—the cornerstone of the teachings of Confucius—will never have to fight for its life as it has to do in Europe—and in your free America, too.

“Listen, now; you may hear a typical Kuo Ming Tang argument: for the speaker is attacking an objection to Socialism which is not at all peculiar to the Chinese, the corruption and extortion of the State. Just let me give you the drift of what he is saying.

“He is saying that officials are a poor lot and that politicians are generally sons of the devil.” (Cheers from said politicians within the hall.) “But within the past two years officials have taken on an altogether new character in



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China. They are no better than they were before, perhaps, but they are now no longer the deputy graft-receivers of a corrupt tyranny—the Revolution has made them the servants of the people. It is for the people to realize that the step on which they are now entering” (they are talking about Sun Yat-sen’s Railway Nationalization scheme) “faces them with two alternatives: either to risk a little corruption from men who are accountable to them by law; or to get ‘efficient management’ from private cupidity and lay the cornerstone of industrial slavery for the time that is to come. Will it be easier to discharge a few officials or to shake off the throttle-hold of a gigantic trust? And what about the men who work on these railways? Why should not they help to control them—and keep tabs on these troublesome officials who seem to be causing so



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much worry? If you take the less courageous course, this is the penalty, he is saying—and this and this; and the facts about American railway conditions—wages, fatal accidents, and the like—with which he winds up his argument come pretty near clinching his case. You know them better than I do.”


The young man in brown sat down amid a long burst of clapping and the meeting became general. One man after another spoke to the question with an extraordinary amount of readiness and conviction, but no vote was taken and the meeting passed on to a general discussion of the political situation. On this topic, although everybody was on the same side there was a very warm discussion indeed. The amount of hostility to the opposing party and to Yuan Shih-k'ai was especially noticeable, and when one speaker exclaimed that Yuan



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was one of the greatest tyrants the country had ever had, there was a fierce chorus of assent, which was intensified tenfold when one passionate voice called out, "Who killed Sung Chiao-jen?"

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"Well, I must be off," said Chang Chi, as the meeting showed signs of drawing to a close. "I have enough of this political situation as it is. As a matter of fact, it is a perfect obsession. Everything just now is subservient to politics when we should be doing nothing else but pulling our own party together and getting ready to govern the country. All the tricks of Yuan Shih-k'ai in Parliament have had one main object; that is, to set the parties squabbling among themselves so bitterly that they would look ridiculous in the eyes of the country—if he succeeds in making us look ridiculous enough, he'll soon




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sweep away our little freedom like a straw."

Prophetic words. I thought of them the next time we met, in a little apartment in Tokio where he was hiding with Sun Yat-sen six short months later, once more a conspirator against the state.

But there was more in the Kuo Ming Tang movement, even in Peking itself, than the conservative reaction, sweeping the surface of politics, can ever go deep enough to destroy. This radicalism was a living force, and its roots stay below the ground. Take another of its manifestations, the new enthusiasm for wide-spread education. Education is the currency of the Chinese people; and the Revolution being spontaneously and characteristically Chinese, proceeded to supply that currency with its typically unregulated enthusiasm. In this field the Kuo Ming Tang, with its extraor-



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dinary mushroom university, set the pace in Peking as well as throughout the country. At the time when I visited it, the Kuo Ming Tang University stood just west of the Chien Men gate, in the heart of the official quarter of the city. It was an institution which had to be seen to be believed. Three months from its opening it had thirteen hundred students; its lecture rooms were jammed to the doors; its quarters had been enlarged twice; it still had a waiting list hundreds long, and its teaching staff numbered fifty Chinese and European teachers.

It was a university sprung up in a night; but through all its activities you could see the spirit which only touches a nation in great moments of national regeneration and conscious revolution. I found a class in law one night attending lectures after nine o'clock, a class



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150 strong, but listening to the lecturer (he was a French ex-consular agent) with an attention which all the Carnegie funds cannot procure in America. Work began at seven in the morning, and ended when the students got tired, for optional classes continued till late in the evening.

Students came to this university from all over China, mostly from the South, and almost entirely revolutionary in sentiment. The fees could not have been more democratic. For five dollars a month you could live, eat, and sleep "in," if you lived "out," you could have all the courses you wanted for three. The courses were hastily planned, the curriculum was not a model of system, there was no laboratory—for that is one thing you can't improvise in three months. A rule limited the professors to four hours' instruction a week, so as

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to keep the range of tuition as wide as possible; foreign teachers were paid twelve dollars a week, Chinese, unless they had a foreign degree, half that sum.


On the efficiency and usefulness of an institution like this it was very hard to form a judgment; but on the reality of the spirit which had brought it into existence, you could not help seeing the power beneath it, a power for national betterment such as has existed in recent times in no other country in the world. A particularly significant thing was the miscellaneous character of its students. Even in China, where education has been on the most democratic lines possible for centuries, and coolies' sons frequently rubbed shoulders with boys from the highest families in the land at the great Examination Halls,—even in China the Kuo Ming Tang students were an unprecedented jumble. I saw



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in the same class-room ex-revolutionary soldiers, officials' sons and shopkeepers' sons, gray headed men and green lads, boys from every province in China, and even some from far-away Mongolia. There was a sprinkling of government officials, and a great mob of candidates for office; there were boys who had run away from home to get their first taste of freedom in a republican university, and there were others who had been taken out of foreign-managed schools and sent here by good republican parents. In short, you could have found thirteen hundred reasons for the presence of those thirteen hundred students in Peking.

Such was the training ground of utopianism and radicalism which the Kuo Ming Tang was providing during the Revolution for the future leavening of the Ha-ta-men streets of their vast and



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swarming people. The consolidation which could have taken these forces, the undisciplined political parties, the schools thrown up in scaffolding alone, the half-primed batteries of the hastily mobilised press, and molded them to a design fitting to the forces behind them would have made a radicalism in China which would have endured to this day. Sung Chiao-jen, the man more capable of making that consolidation than any other, was killed as he was starting for Peking to take the work actually in hand. This murder cuts across the whole history of the revolutionary time. But a deeper and fairer reason is that the time which could not bring out its own consolidation was not really ready to take hold with strong, purposeful hands of the sword of national opportunity which was so nearly in its grasp.

Meanwhile, the sword that the radi-



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cals let slip was grasped by another hand. Their opportunity made Yuan Shih-k'ai master of China. Let us see in the next chapter what his mastery has meant.

V

LEADERSHIP AND YUAN SHIH-K'AI

WHEN Li Hung-chang stood with his back against the wall at Shimonoseki, striving alone to avert the crushing humiliation of his nation that the Japanese diplomats had determined should crown their victory in the war of 1895, he uttered this passionate protest, a protest in which there rests the tragedy of a people.


"You have a nation at your back," he exclaimed, "a united nation of determined and patriotic people; but what you are fighting is only one man!"

It was a vivid picture in the cunning old diplomat's mind—that of the jeal-

ous and slothful court cliques reviewing his work without a vestige of sympathy or concern, save in their own spiteful, eunuch-ridden intrigues, disdaining in the foreigner, even in the hour of their humiliation, nothing so much as his power and his unity of purpose.

Under such a government leadership was impossible, and mutual confidence between a leader and his people grotesquely so. Li Hung-chang, through all his years of seeming power, never attained such a leadership, never even anticipated it. In his day the Chinese people were an entity unrealizable to the mind.

The Chinese people over whom Yuan Shih-k'ai is dictator to-day have undergone a powerful change. Yuan has lived the life of the old-time official; he carries with him the old-time cynicism and obliqueness of policy; he has been



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trained throughout his life in the old school. But he is confronted not merely with a people, but with a nation, and with a nation that is coming more rapidly than the mind can follow to a consolidation of structure and to an intensified sense of common purpose.


The essential point to understand about his past is that he is rooted in the same rigid traditions which the Chinese Revolution rose to overthrow. And the marvel of his present position is the elasticity with which he has adapted himself to the change. To a certain extent he has trimmed the new order to suit himself, but no man could have survived in his place who did not yield vast concessions of the old order in an instinctive grasp of the demands of the new. True, place and power lay that way; but it is an error of the Radicals to suppose that some mysterious power



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guides a man dominant in his time in the direction of his own self-interest. Only an infinite subtlety of adaptation and intelligent compromise could have raised this blunt, unmoral character, steeped in the strategy of the old school, to the dominant position he now holds in the new.


Yuan rose to preëminence as the universally accepted successor to Li Hung-chang during the constructive period of Manchu statesmanship in which the old Dowager Empress ably and sincerely did her best to wipe out the days of the shame of the Boxers. In the alteration of China to a different standard of leadership her impressive decrees between 1902 and 1908 contributed immeasurably to the rising demand for a government worthy of the Chinese people. It is the achievements and standards of those days which, more



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than any other influence, gave us the key to Yuan Shih-k'ai's preëminence.


The first great landmark of these reforms was the decree removing the ban of three centuries on marriages between Manchus and Chinese, and, incidentally, anticipating the revolutionary order of to-day by making optional the wearing of the queue, with which the Manchu had branded the Chinese as a conquered race. There followed in rapid succession the decree introducing Western learning and disestablishing the ancient scholarship, which an American scholar has called the greatest intellectual change in the history of mankind, the decree extending education to women, the decree reorganizing the army on a modern plan, and consolidating on lines looking toward constitutional government the executive departments of Peking, and finally the great edict of



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1906, accepting the principle of constitutionalism, and formulating the steps in which something new was to be granted each year, in order that China might in nine years time attain the basis of a parliamentary government. An integral part of this movement was also the decree against opium, which should run its course next year; a decree, which more than any other single reform, has revealed to the world the moral fervor which is behind the regeneration of the Chinese people.


During these years Yuan Shih-k'ai, as governor of the metropolitan province of Chihli, and later as president of the Waiwupu, or Foreign Office, headship of which tacitly amounted to being prime minister, was in part the brains and wholly the arm and shield of the administration. The model army then organized was his army, and his army



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it has always been. He organized it first at Tientsin, and it was at Tientsin where as governor of Chihli he gave China her first example of model municipal government. He it was who worked out the details of the other reforms, he it was who planned that before the ultimate Parliament in Peking, provincial parliaments in eighteen provincial capitals should be preparing and educating the mind of the people for the larger pattern of representative government to come.

The importance of this period should not be overestimated. The edicts were regarded by the Chinese people more as promises than as laws, and promises which they showed in 1911 they were very far from believing. But even as promises, they were founded on the deepest currents of public feeling the Chinese people had yet experienced.



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They coincided with a new national determination on the part of China to maintain her sovereignty against foreign exploitation. It is this period, to which foreign railway promoters refer as "the era of public opinion," in which China first made headway against the calculated sovereignty of foreign powers over the railways they were constructing within her borders. It was a formative, germinating period. And the moral ideas which were at the base of most of what reflection it had in the minds of the people were fittingly expressed by the last great edict of the Manchus, which abolished on February 22, 1910 the practice of slavery and the buying and selling of human beings in China.

This was not a time for leadership, because the Chinese people were still far from being either in pretense or in

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reality active participants in the reforms generated from Peking. It was a period for strategy; and Yuan Shih-k'ai proved himself then the supreme strategist of his day. Its defect, in which he deeply shared, was that it preserved the old jealousies and the old disunities which still kept alive in China and out an active and irreconcilable body of adversaries to the State. The Dowager Empress's desire to govern liberally ceased abruptly where it crossed past jealousies and unforgiven injuries to her personal pride. It is an indelible blot on her and on Yuan Shih-k'ai's statesmanship that the two universally esteemed leaders of the reform movement of 1898, Kang Yu-wei and Liang Chi-ch'iao, were not recalled from their exile in Tokio to the service of their country. The narrowness of the governing clique was still more



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manifest in the ruthless war of extermination it maintained against the more radical leaders, in the price on Sun Yat-sen's head, in the murderous attempt it made to kidnap him in London and bring him home to certain death, from which his friend, Dr. Cantlie, saved him by the narrowest of margins, and in the gradual alienation of practically the whole merchant and student population abroad and the "Young China" politicals and intellectuals at home.


With the death of the Dowager Empress in 1908, the vigor and courage of the Manchu domination disappeared, and the career of triumphant ineptitude began which ended in 1911, as it richly deserved to end. Yuan Shih-k'ai was humiliated and dismissed, and the part of Mirabeau, which he might have played successfully, with his robust



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health and assured span of life, disappeared from the cast altogether. Prince Chun, his sworn enemy, became regent, and Prince Ching, no less bitter a foe to constitutionalism and reform, was the choice of the Manchu party for premier. To redeem the Dowager-Empress's grandiose plans for a national Parliament with a body presided over by Prince Ching was to follow with the uncanny faithfulness of history the matter in which Louis of France played with the great, thirsty spirit of his time in his exasperating harlequinade over the States-General. The floods came, the house fell, and Yuan Shih-k'ai stepped in between the two factions and seized the empty throne.


I have told how neither in military strength nor in party unity were the Revolutionists able to make good their victory. There was another factor.



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Yuan had the confidence of the powers. It is an open secret that Wu Ting-fang, who was for the first few months acting foreign minister for the Revolutionists, only prevented several major European powers from lending their full support towards crushing the Revolution by threatening a boycott of foreign goods throughout Southern China. And as support in this case meant money, which would have to be supplied by the very banks who would lose most heavily by the boycott, it was not forthcoming.

If there is one thing more irrelevant than another in considering the character of a man like Yuan Shih-k'ai, it is endeavoring to follow his motives. One instance, the instance of his betrayal of the Reformers of 1898 into the hands of the Dowager Empress, is sufficient to show the hopelessness of such a



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method. The young reformer-emperor ordered him to seize the person of the Dowager Empress and put to death her minister, Jung Lu. Instead, Yuan placed the "Old Buddha" and her reactionary following once more in authority and allowed them to crush out the reform movement of the "Hundred Days" in the tide of jingoism which ended two years later in the Boxer tragedy. The Revolutionists believe that by his action Yuan is more responsible than any other man for that tragedy. He held the key to the whole situation, the army. His motives for throwing the balance one way or the other have been exhaustively thrashed out during the past eighteen years in a hundred different lights; and there is as much disagreement as ever. The essential fact remains, however—the essential Oriental fact of the situation—



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that Yuan did throw in his lot with the stronger faction. No Chinese official of his time and training could be expected to do differently. It was given to Yuan's strategic genius to see the stronger faction; and it is this discernment, and his boldness in acting upon it, that more than anything else explains how he has come to be where he is today.


Yuan came into the power, then, and he assumed it, not by virtue of his leadership, because he has never of his own accord given the country a popular lead in anything, but by virtue of the genius that is instinctively his, the grand strategy of the old Chinese official. He found the literate classes of the Chinese people clamoring for the first time in their history that they be treated as a nation. He declared for the Republic, and beat down the last



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vestige of Manchu resistance by getting all his generals—and many of theirs—to declare for it too. Then he obtained from the Manchus, by a superb stroke of generalship, the famous edict ordering *him* to establish the Republic. He won over the Southern leaders, notably Sun Yat-sen, by promising them a parliament and a cabinet in which they would presumably have the major share.

But he never let go one single vestige of the real power of his position; as military chief, as administrative head, and as the sole repository of foreign confidence he remained, as he intended to remain, supreme. Little by little, he drew the moderates round him and isolated the radicals. We saw the outcome of his strategy when we traced in the first chapter the downfall of the imaginative inspiration of the Revolutionary parties. There was only one



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interlude in that downfall when it seemed as if the Southern leaders might at last make headway. That was when America, after withdrawing from the Six Power Loan, recognized the Chinese Republic in April, 1918. With real insight and courage, President Wilson attached to his recognition the proviso that the government he recognized must be equally satisfactory to the Kuo Ming Tang leaders of the South, who were then in acknowledged control of both houses of Parliament.

But hardly had this assurance been received than Yuan obtained a testimony to his own dominant position that overwhelmed altogether the good-natured friendliness of America toward the Republican leaders. This was the Great Loan, which fell like a bomb-shell on China on the night of April 26-27. In its relation to the leadership

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of Yuan Shih-k'ai, the meaning of this loan is impressive. It meant that the European bankers participating in it were willing to stake everything, not on the constitutional institutions which were supposed to embody China's Republican government, but on the security and reliable headship of one man. Then and there Europe abandoned Parliament and the Revolution in China to their fate, and bet on a man; and the man was Yuan Shih-k'ai.

Armed with this power, as we have seen, the President proceeded to complete the isolation of the leaders of the First Revolution, and after beating down their futile opposition in the campaign of the summer and fall of 1913, he outlawed their parties, drove their leaders out of the country, destroyed their Parliament in Peking as well as the Assemblies in the provincial capi-



tals, suppressed their newspapers, and on October 10, the anniversary of the First Revolution he had so thoroughly discredited, had himself inaugurated as Permanent President in Peking.


Out of the reaction that followed this period, there emerged one essential fact, that it was now necessary to give China, after more than two years of bitter faction struggles, a government that consolidated in some fashion or other the new requirements of the situation. The first and principal requirement of the situation was that the people expected a government that would be controlled by no clique or party or section, but would be entirely national. In other words, national government in China had its first chance in the year 1914. How this opportunity has been met I describe in part in the next chapter; as for the part in it played by Yuan



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Shih-k'ai, even his enemies could not deny that for more than a year he was the effective nucleus of the most progressive and successful administration China has ever had. Particularly during 1914 and the early months of 1915, when the European war and the *impasse* with Japan harassed China with the burden of a double crisis, the new government bore up under the strain magnificently, and the whole world admitted that the Chinese people had never faced a national crisis with a deeper sense of solidarity and patriotic fortitude.

On top of this genuine proof of internal unification, however, there has come another far-reaching issue, on which there can be no doubt that the grand strategy of the President is going to have its ultimate and final test. That is the Monarchy Restoration is-



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sue. During the fall and winter of last year the agitation for a constitutional monarchy which had long been smoldering, suddenly burst out and began to burn briskly throughout the country. Its patron society was the Chou-an Hwei, or, as it may be innocently translated, the Peace Promotion Society. The head of this society was Mr. Yang Tu, a man who provided an exceptional medium for compromise between various political groups in China. Yang Tu was a subordinate lieutenant of Kang Yu-wei and Liang Chi-ch'iao in the Hundred Days of Reform in '98; and like his tutors had to flee for his life before the swift revenge of the Dowager Empress. Later, when that ingenious old lady found it necessary to conciliate some of the constitutional leaders, she picked out Yang Tu as one of the objects of her tardy favor. He




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returned to Peking as a Manchu official, and became in time an active apologist, so many Chinese officials of the time assert, of the Manchu régime. He achieved another political transformation when, with the coming of the Revolution, he abandoned the Manchus and became a strong partizan of Yuan Shih-k'ai.

To this popular agitation of presumably non-partizan appeal there was soon added an impressive sanction by a foreign scholar, none other than Dr. Frank Goodnow, president of Johns Hopkins University, and American advisor on constitutional affairs to the Chinese Republic. Dr. Goodnow's well-known memorandum advising China to become a monarchy, with the ostentatious disinterestedness of its American origin behind it, had, and was meant to have, a powerful effect on the Chinese

mind. It precipitated the subject into the arena of practical politics; and in spite of the seemingly earnest refusal of Yuan Shih-k'ai even to consider the offer, the movement spread with extraordinary rapidity throughout the country.

Dr. Goodnow's memorandum was published in the summer of 1915—on August 20, to be exact—and within four months—by December 15—China was committed to a monarchy. Thus promptly are little matters like changes in the form of government effected in modern China. Yuan refused, refused again, and finally consented to become Emperor. The form of his choosing was a republican form, but his military powers and his administrative autocracy controlled the issue from the beginning. We read of primaries, of representative bodies of voters, of a plebiscite



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of "good" citizens, and of democratic machinery without end, little of which was ever known, or ever will be known, in any constitutional country. But the artifice and strategy of old China found it the means to its end, and justified its use by success.

How complete this success was we can vividly see in the dramatic happenings of the 12th and 13th of last December in Peking. Citizens' representative conferences including 1834 representatives of the people elected at "primaries" held in all the provincial capitals, as well as in a number of other centers of population, had gathered in the national capital. The results of their election were a striking tribute to the convincing "arguments" of the monarchist party. For this is what the Council of State had to report to the President on the 12th of December:



“That the Council yesterday made a final examination of the votes of the Citizens’ Representative Conference, *all of which* were found to be in favor of the establishment of a constitutional monarchy, with His Excellency Yuan Shih-k’ai as first emperor. The Council of State therefore requests H. E. Yuan Shih-k’ai to obey the true will of the people, and to ascend the throne.”


In reply to this earnest despatch Yuan refused to accept the throne owing to the oaths taken at his formal inauguration as First President of the Republic, and also because his ability did not fit him for the important and exalted position offered him by the Citizens’ Representative Committee. Hence he requested the Council of State to select some one else more capable and worthy to occupy the Imperial Throne.



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Thereupon the Council of State convened another meeting and forwarded a second despatch urging Yuan—etc., etc.


Let us skip these supplications, and come to the next day, when this laconic despatch of the 13th December reveals Yuan's final attitude toward the "polished perturbation, golden care" that was offered to him in the Imperial purple. "President Yuan Shih-k'ai," it runs, "in reply to the second despatch forwarded by the Council of State, consents to become emperor on condition that the form of government is not changed till next year. He realizes that the step he has taken in accepting the throne of China might prove disastrous to his family, but he loves his country, and is prepared to make any sacrifice for it. Consequently he bows to the will of the people."



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Thus entered the monarchy—but not officially. Yuan's first move as titular sovereign was worthy of his genius. It was to postpone the inauguration of the new régime until the new year. The new year came—and with it a formidable rebellion in the great southwestern province of Yunnan. Very well, he postponed the inauguration “indefinitely.” There it rests to-day; the opportunity of the Chinese people again to become “chen” (subjects), to *kowtow* before Imperial dignity, as well as before the half a score of lesser grades of nobility it is Yuan's gracious purpose to create for their joy and adulation—this opportunity is still an unfulfilled promise.

It will be better for them if it is never realized. For however good a government some future monarchy may give China, the present monarchy agitation



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was conceived in an ambitious opportunism of which Dr. Goodnow was merely the successful cat's-paw, and carried to its present triumph mainly through the unscrupulous intrigues of a court camarilla wholly insignificant in its popular representation.

The first and most final thing that can be said against the whole coup is that it is a senseless diversion of China's patriotic energy at a time when the very existence of the nation is threatened as never before. Dr. Goodnow expressed the view of many apologists of the monarchy in his argument that it was necessary for the safety of the state that the chief executive have ample power. Very well; he has. Not only will a monarchy give Yuan no more real power than he possesses to-day, but it will upset that compromise between the North and the South of which the form



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of the Republic was a very visible assurance. In all political situations names have an infinite conjuring power. The Republic of China represents to thousands of liberal Chinese a great bid for national liberty; they realize with a perfectly rational instinct that it has given them standing and sympathetic appreciation throughout the world. It has proved a rallying ground for national unity before; it could prove so again. If Yuan is indispensable (a rather humiliating thought for China), a dead Emperor, with rivals contending for the prize of a throne, would be no better than a dead President, with a successor to be elected with at least the pretense of popular choice. The *issue* is a false one; it should be between constitutionalism and autocracy, between progress and reaction, between a national government and a ruling clique.



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That is the problem China has got to work out, and nothing obscures it more completely than the injection, at this time of all times, of insincere and disturbing historical analogy, the baring of self-interest, and the unloosening of jealousy, suspicion, and spreading civil discord which has followed the monarchy agitation.

There is but one other principle to state; and that is that the Chinese worship of monarchical institutions, for all its centuries, is largely an illusion for foreign consumption. The Chinese have not even had a nobility, and their local government, which has been until recently the only government the people have felt, has been essentially democratic, even communistic in character. Now the people are feeling the national government for the first time in their history; indeed, one could almost say



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that government on a national scale has only been introduced into China within the past few years. Their attitude toward monarchy and all its trappings was admirably expressed in the intense feeling of relief that followed the funerals of the Dowager Empress and the Emperor in 1909; with the great literate public opinion of China, particularly that south of the Yang-tse River, that was the funeral-year of respect for the monarchy. The whole nation has felt since then a lessening in the load of national humiliation, and the point that this has occurred under a Republic has not been missed. Dr. Goodnow qualified his memorandum at many angles, but he did not forbear to insult the pride of China deeply on this particular point—that they could not understand an idea for national government that they had administered for centuries as local



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government. He compared them with Mexico, with Ecuador, with the Cromwellian Commonwealth; and the application to their present condition of comparisons with Villa and his Yaquis, with the mob anarchies of Quito, and the excesses of our own witch-burning ancestors in the days when a Drogheda massacre was merely an episode, did not exactly fill with sweet reasonableness the breasts of Chinese Republicans.

Indeed, that an American could think of investing his country's prestige in China in advice depending on analogies such as these has filled responsible leaders of modern China with consternation. I am not forgetting that Dr. Goodnow qualified his advice with many virtuous assertions, among them that no change from republic to monarchy should be considered (1) should the foreign powers oppose it, (2) should



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the Chinese people rise in rebellion against the change, (3) should any doubt exist about the law of succession, and (4) should the new Government be less likely to provide for the just development of constitutional government. These are excellent academic theses, but Dr. Goodnow has yet to learn that when you are dealing with a nation in the stress of constitutional upheaval, your flat statement counts for one hundred per cent. and your qualifications count for nil. An American came out against the Chinese Republic—that is the conspicuous shame of it—for when the monarchy restoration societies got down seriously to the task of spreading his Memorandum over the country, these qualifications disappeared like chaff. The fact that Dr. Goodnow thought that China *might* be more likely to get constitutional government under a mon-



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archy is of no practical consequence beside the *kind of monarchy* for which his advice helped to make smooth the path; nor does it excuse the amazing ineptness of changing horses on a matter of organic government in the mid-stream of China's perplexities to maintain the substance of independence itself.


I am not here giving simply the detached opinion of a foreign observer; I am stating what any student of the matter can find out for himself is the firm conviction of a very formidable element of China's political leadership. Take the men, for instance, who have been throughout the closest and most constructive sympathizers with Yuan's policies in the immediate past. Take the foremost political and constitutional leader in China to-day—Liang Chi-ch'iao—what does this veteran constitutional monarchist think of the monarchy



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proposed under these circumstances? Liang, Minister of Justice under Yuan till a few months ago, opponent of the Revolution because he stoutly held that a limited monarchy was then far preferable to the Republic, deep student and nationally respected leader that he is, has used all the logic and eloquence of his tireless pen ever since the present monarchy agitation began—to help it to realize his own recent monarchical ideas? No, to attack it as the greatest peril China is facing to-day. Listen to this:

“It is a constitution that we need to ensure domestic solidarity; and the President knows that no change in the form of Government which tears up the obligation to stand by the Republic is a step in the direction of constitutionalism. Every well informed person knows that the monarchist agitation is




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nothing more than the plot of a military camarilla."

It is worth noting that Yuan repeated this obligation as late as September 6 of last year, when he wrote to the Grand Council (Tsangcheng Yuan) as follows:


"It is now four years since I was entrusted by the people with the office of the presidency of the Republic. . . . It is my special duty to maintain the Republic as the form of government."

As the signs increased that Yuan regarded this pledge as a "scrap of paper," Liang Chi-ch'iao did the only possible thing—he resigned from office and left Peking. Is he the only national statesman and former supporter who has done this? The answer to this question is the key to current Chinese politics.



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Distinctly, he is not. A list of the resignations during the past few months of Chinese high in public life reveals a condition of affairs wholly unsuspected by those who think the Chinese are receiving the monarchy kindly, or even with indifference. Liang resigned on the 3rd of October. On the 4th, Hsu Shih-chang resigned as Secretary of State. Hsu Shih-chang is a conservative of the conservatives—guardian to the Emperor, former premier, old-time official under the Manchus, he was one of the bulwarks of Yuan's government; yet he resigned like any Jacobin at the first sniff of the monarchy. On the 3rd of October Li Yuan-hung, vice-president of sorts and chairman of the Grand Council, was absent from a very important session. He has not attended since. On New Year's Day he was offered the title of Prince. He refused




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it, and announced that he had made up his mind he would have nothing to do with the new régime.

Tang Hwa-lung, Minister for Education, the brilliant political leader who had been Speaker of the Hupeh Assembly, Speaker of the National House of Representatives, and leader of one of its three dominant political parties, resigned in September. Chang Chien, Minister for Agriculture and Commerce, famous throughout China as an industrial pioneer and social reformer (also a constitutional monarchist), resigned on October 30. Tuan Chi-jui, Minister for War, lifetime associate of Yuan Shih-k'ai and the foremost military authority in China, resigned on August 30, remained in privacy in Peking for several months, and, according to one story, "escaped" from the capital in coolie dress on the first

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of January. Sun Pao-chi, ex-Foreign Minister, resigned from his post as Director of the Audit Department on November 1, ex-Premier Hsiung Hsi-ling, head of the "government of all the talents" which pulled China so splendidly through her crisis in 1913 and 1914, resigned from his post as Director of the Oil Bureau (supervising the Standard Oil Contract) preceded him by a week or so, and Chuan En-kwan, Director of the Censorate, abandoned his office on October 9. A flood of minor resignations accompanied and followed these, and with the decisive actions of December 15, when Yuan accepted the monarchy, more than thirty first-class resignations were handed in within a week, including the Vice-Minister of War, the Vice-Minister of the Interior, and numerous members of the Grand Council itself. Not the least of




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these was Tsai Ao, ex-Governor of Yunnan, and Director of the Land Measurement Bureau, who left Tientsin in December for parts unknown. His whereabouts became quickly evident, however, with the appearance of widespread revolt in his native province of Yunnan early in January, a rebellion which led directly to the indefinite postponement of the official inauguration of the monarchy, and may lead to results even more decisive before it is finished.

This list is sufficiently long already to convince any fair-minded person that there is no real national voice in China for the change of government. These men are not radicals, neither are they blind reactionaries; they are for the most part the "workers" of modern China unwedded to any political theory save that of the maximum of national




interest. To the fact that they are obviously standing off from the monarchy movement you must also add the reminder that others of the best minds of China who have not recently been holding office are equally as aloof, and obviously equally as determined to remain so. Wu Ting-fang, Wen Tsung-yao, Wang Chung-hwei, and Tang Shao-yi, all ex-Republican ministers, are biding their time in Shanghai; going a little further radical-wards, Dr. Chen Chin-tao, Tsai Yuan-pei, and Wang Cheng-ting (C. T. Wang), ex-ministers of Finance, Education, and Communications, are wholly out of touch with the monarchical movement. Kang Yu-wei, the great '98 reformer, and leader of Chinese constitutionalism for fifteen years, will not even come to Peking, so complete is his distrust of the current régime.



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If such men as these are against, or indifferent to, the monarchy restoration movement, it is a travesty to say that it represents anything like the progressive mind of the Chinese people. Who, then, is for it? Well, let us begin with one significant instance. When Yuan Shih-k'ai toward the end of January announced that owing to "local disturbances" his inauguration would be postponed, who was it who bade him ascend the throne promptly, and admonished him that the rising was simply due to his delay in assuming the Imperial purple. Why, it was Prince Ching, Manchu of the Manchus, arch-reactionary, life-long enemy of constitutionalism and reform, the Premier of the Manchu government overthrow by the Revolution in 1911. Who was president of the Li-fah Yuan, the administrative council which prepared and put



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through the elaborate fiasco of popular vote by which Yuan was declared the choice of "the people"? That was Prince Chun, another Manchu prince, ex-Regent, and father of the deposed little Chinese Emperor, Pu Yi, who to this day is allowed to live in a palace in Peking in all the state of a visiting sovereign—at the expense of the Chinese people.

From this approval the monarchy restoration movement cannot separate itself. Nor, moreover, can it be denied that its principal Chinese protagonist throughout has been Liang Shih-yi, the most unscrupulous political leader in modern China as well as one of the half-dozen of the very ablest of them all. By title, Liang is Director of the Bank of Communications, but in reality he is Chief Director of Grand Strategy to the President, and has been so since

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Yuan has been in power in Peking. This cunning Cantonese is as strong as Yuan, if not stronger, and in the monarchy agitation he has been playing a characteristic game. Chou Tzu-chi, the clever Minister of Finance, is also the President's man, and Lu Cheng-hsiang, the brilliant Secretary of Foreign Affairs, who has just doubled up with Hsu Shih-chang's old position as Secretary of State, seems too patriotically interested in the duties of his own crucial office to take a vital interest either way; but he has *not* resigned. The other members of the Cabinet seem merely quiescent.

Behind Yuan's name, the driving force of the monarchist agitation has come from a group of Manchu Jacobites led by Prince Ching and Prince Chun, and from the cult of seekers after place and power always to be found in



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the wake of Liang Shih-yi. There is another high placed monarchist, whose activities are shrouded in rather more mystery than the rest—the President's eldest son and prospective heir-apparent under an Empire, Yuan Ko-ting. This young man is popularly supposed to have sustained a severe accident from a fall from his horse in the spring of 1911, a mishap which left his vitality and his desire to mingle in public affairs at low ebb. His interference in the present conspiracy is, however, unquestionable, and as it has become more manifest, so have the stories increased of his absorption in Buddhism, his distaste of politics, and his utter abhorrence of the responsibilities of royalty. But there is little doubt that he is one of the members of the court camarilla whose intrigues Liang Chi-ch'iao has so bluntly and clearly pointed out as the



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secret manufacturers of the whole monarchist agitation.

One other factor remains—the army. No one really knows where the army stands. Tuan Chi-jui is a general of far-ramifying influence, and there are persistent rumors that Feng Kuo-chang, the new Chief-of-Staff, has had his loyalty considerably cooled by Tuan's rupture with Peking. Surely leaders of the class of Chang Hsun (the butcher of Nanking) and Lung Chi-kwong, the "pacifier" of Canton, cannot be relied on for loyalty except where loyalty is clearly shown to be profitable. So far, these three generals, together with another veteran, Chang Kwei-ti, have been offered titles as Dukes in the new régime, but up to February, they were still refusing these flattering distinctions. The point should not be missed that these men



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hold a very substantial part of the balance of power in modern China, and since Yuan has bereft the country of constitutionalism far more so than before.

Yuan has aimed high; but as usual, his first aim may not be his final shot. It is impossible to believe that he will carry through his monarchical aspirations unimpaired against the dead set of opinion that has so manifestly arisen against them in quarters to which prudence at least demands close and respectful attention. No one has reminded him of the enduring limitations of his situation more significantly than the always out-spoken Anglo-Chinese writer, Putnam Weale, who, I believe, is the best foreign friend in the field of journalism China has at this juncture.

"President Yuan Shih-k'ai," he says, "will soon reach the parting of the ways.

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If he allows such evil counselors to work their will, if he misinterprets foreign silence, there is no logical reason why, instead of becoming a Chinese Washington, he should become, for a time at least, an Asiatic Napoleon—until all is ready in Japan. The reëstablishment of the empire and what it would imply would simply find the European powers and America—the liberal nations—indifferent to the fate of China. The tremendous moral support which saved the situation in the spring of 1915 will never again be given to a nation which declares itself afraid to govern, and thus tacitly admits that it is a subject-race. All talk of a constitutional monarchy is a mere juggling with words; a country that is convinced by 'arguments by Professor Goodnow and the pamphleteer Yung Tu, before representative government has even been tried, would




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be much more easily convinced with a shot-gun."

What selfish hopes and expectations this veteran strategist may cherish in the immediate future of his country do not concern us here. It is for us merely to glimpse the quality of his mind, and to conceive from the palpable facts, the plain and perceivable course he has traced through the modern history of China, the training and traditions that lie at the root of his career and that have been made manifest whenever he has moved a piece on the chessboard of politics; and especially from the men who are with him, the men who are against him—to conceive from these things what China may expect in the immediate future from the free play of his genius.

One thing is plain—that she cannot expect real republicanism unless she is



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again ready to die for the Republic that is now in such crucial danger.*

* On March 22d the State Department issued a mandate announcing on the authority of Yuan Shih-k'ai the abandonment of the monarchy and the resumption of the republic, thus providing the final justification of the soundness of the above estimate of the situation. Hsu Chi-chang returned to power and signed the document as Secretary of State. In it Yuan frankly admitted that the monarchy was hopeless and humbly shouldered the blame for his mistake in these remarkable words: "I have myself to blame for my lack of virtue. Why should I blame others? The people have been thrown into misery. The soldiers have been made to bear hardships. Commerce has declined. Taking this condition into consideration, I feel exceedingly sorry."

That is Yuan's way of saying—"By that sin fell the angels."

Moreover, Yuan's default, so far from pacifying the southern revolutionists, has already stirred them to add to the "No Monarchy" cry the old slogan of the Second Revolution, "Down with Yuan himself!" The result is that he is worse beset than before, and a secession movement is spreading rapidly over the south which may mean more liberalism, or it may mean—Japan.



VI

CLUTCHING HANDS

SOME fifteen years ago Lord Charles Beresford paid a short, but breezy visit to the far East, and when he went home he wrote a book about his trip that he called "The Break-up of China." It was a book that expressed and confirmed the settled mood of the time. In the shadow of the Boxer terror, and the hardly less shameful reprisals that avenged it, the dissolution of China did seem very near. Subtler minds than that of the impressionable British admiral thought of that flabby old empire, and the image at the back of their minds was one of helplessness baited all about by clutching for-

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eign hands. In the intimacy of the crushing experiences of 1900 they forgot, as we are forgetting to-day, that the weakness of China is a very old and a thoroughly matured problem. They might have read to advantage, as we might read it now, what was said in the sixties by Anson Burlingame, that strange, quixotic American genius who went on a mission to Europe half a century ago to save China from a dissolution which he feared to see in his own lifetime. How wholly modern it seems to hear him say, "I hope to procure some mitigation of those aggressive steps and tendencies which are rapidly bringing nearer the parceling-out of China among the greedy monarchies of Europe"!

Since Burlingame's day waves upon waves of the aggression in which he foresaw immediate ruin have rolled



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ever nearer to Peking. China has been stripped of the fortress-harbors on her coast; provinces and dependencies have been torn from her borders from Korea and Mongolia round to Tibet and Tongking. Foreign trunk railroads have cut strategic thoroughfares up and down and across the heart of her dominion. Foreign bankers and debt commissioners have held in ransom her finances and have dominated her trade. And finally a torrent of revolution from within has replaced the dynasty of a quarter of a thousand years with a makeshift combination of republicanism without democracy and tyranny without a throne. The last fifteen years in China have been in particular one steady course of continuous and ascending crises, a drama of unsettled forces driven from without by complicated currents of political adventure



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and economic greed. Yet in the face of all these humiliations, which have comprised the deliberate policy of our generation to capitalize and perpetuate her feebleness, look with unprejudiced eyes on the China of this year 1916, and what do you find? China's reply to the humiliations that have been put upon her is not merely the new patriotism and the new sense of nationality so vividly revealed in the Revolution, but actually a firmer and better consolidated authority over the eighteen provinces of the nation than has ever before been attained in the history of the Chinese people.


In the year of which we have the last complete record, the year 1914, China accomplished two amazing and absolutely unprecedented things, which no one who does not know of the Sisyphean-like handicaps against her can possibly



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appreciate. On her own national credit and among her own people she raised, in the first place, her first substantial domestic loans, a financial initiative which has now brought her a fund of almost thirty millions of dollars. And in the second she came at last through a whole financial year not only with the staggering burdens of her foreign indebtedness paid up on the nail to the last penny, but with an actual surplus of cash in hand that was helped by no foreign loan. These are real bids for freedom, not mere clever financial management; they are the moral answer of a people protesting against the extinction of their political life.

These very significant innovations mean one thing very plainly: that the old peril—the peril of bankruptcy, of attrition through incompetence that Beresford and his school talked about



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—is, to say the least, no longer a sure thing. The game of getting deeper and deeper into the mire by paying off old debts with new loans is almost over in China.


I emphasize these unquestionable signs of progress and growing solidarity to put them in all the sharper contrast with a new peril—a peril that within the past year has overshadowed everything else in the far East. That is the series of harsh and drastic demands which Japan in 1915 put up to China, in the nature, if not in the form, of a peremptory ultimatum. Nothing is more ironic than the distinction, the perfect contrast between the old peril through which China was at last beginning to see her path to self-respect, and this new peril, against which all her painful reconstruction counts as absolutely nothing. The



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handicaps that have been loaded on her do count. Their example counts in spurring Japan on to an emulation which European nations can hardly deny her with consistency. Their political results count in making Japan feel that only by other like handicaps—which in her case begin to look like badges of ownership—can she make good her opportunities in terms of a new balance of power in the Pacific. In other words, the burdens of international meddling provide an essential and ideal condition for the present high tide of Japanese aggression. They have chloroformed the victim; but it has fallen to a rival to pick his pockets.

Japan's hegemony in the far East is now assured—temporarily, at any rate—and in it we see the first and the most dramatic alteration in the world's balance of power which has so far been ef-



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fectured by the great war. So far as her new ascendancy is going to influence China, however, we cannot see her opportunity in its right proportions until we have put it from the side of China herself. The Japanese have raised the wind undoubtedly in which China's junk is madly careering to-day, but it was not they who over-ballasted her with debts and difficulties, so that even in time of peace her loadline was over her hatches. It is true that the crushing indemnity she imposed at the end of the Chino-Japanese War of 1895 put China in debt to the tune of over \$270,000,000 * at the beginning of her borrowing career. But this sum was assented to by the powers at a time when they exercised real interference in the affairs of Japan. And five years later they made it look insignificant in-


* Of which about \$150,000,000 is still outstanding.



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deed when they placed on China's shoulders the long-drawn-out disaster of the Boxer indemnity. It was Europe that set the pace, and it is European policy that has made China what she is to-day. That is why an understanding of that policy is absolutely vital in order to grasp in its proper perspective the peril of the present.

To-day the Boxer indemnity is still the freshest and the most stinging of all the grievances of the Chinese people. They see clearly that this monstrous imposition, hypocritically imposed on them as a moral penalty, was in reality nothing more or less than a deliberate quietus on their political aspirations for a generation. For the powers not only created a gigantic obligation; they stultified the very consolidation which might have enabled China to meet that obligation. For their own benefit they



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appropriated and pared down all the funds that could really be called national, and the reorganization which it was then their supreme opportunity to initiate they contemptuously disclaimed.

Those consequences we see to-day. They culminated in a revolution, which had its fundamental cause more nearly than anything else in this one fact—China's humiliation before her foreign bondholders. When the revolution broke out in October, 1911, three provinces were in revolt against the nationalization of railways, not because they were opposed to that policy, but because its influence was a foreign influence and because it meant the buying out of Chinese railways with foreign money. And indeed then the second chapter of interference by the international concert was just beginning. In the first chapter the great banking pow-



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ers really sought nothing more than to paralyze Chinese reconstruction before the rush of foreign initiative they knew was imminent. The second chapter saw them meeting another great crisis in Chinese society with the belated decision to put this reconstruction into effect themselves. We can lump together the series of sweeping concessions and rearrangements and internal crises which culminated in the big five-power loan of the spring of 1913 in an intelligent appreciation of one main object. This was the creation of a debt commission. The shadows of revolutionary turmoil and anarchy gave a unique opportunity for the painless absorption of China's freedom. Viewed as a single process, it is amazing to look back and see how far this strategy went as a firm and deliberate policy.

There were two lines of advance:

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every power got what it could for itself by developing the "spheres of interest" wedge into the fast-decaying "open-door" theory; and the consortium as a whole conceived and put into operation a practical framework of foreign control at Peking. It was then that Russia got outer Mongolia and that England invented and enforced new prerogatives in Tibet. Railway absorption promised Germany twenty million dollars' worth of new lines in southern and western Shantung. Japan got eleven hundred miles of new railway concessions in Manchuria and eastern Mongolia, an invaluable foothold for validating her present claims. France and Russia between them, with a Belgian company as a cat's-paw, cut China with grandiose completeness by two vast systems from the French border on the south to a rail-head in the extreme north



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in easy competing distance with the trans-Siberian, and by a concession of three thousand miles through the heart of China to the sea, pointing in the far west directly toward the spreading trans-Caspian system from European Russia. England confirmed her hold with two thousand miles of new projects in the Yang-tse basin. Our own bankers were ordered off these much-trespassed premises by President Wilson himself, but it is a question if we did not carry away the choicest single plum of all when the Standard Oil Company secured what amounts to the exclusive exploiting right over the northwestern oil-fields, agreed by more than one international authority to be the richest oil-deposits in the known world.


The course of these concessions was one of the most chaotic competition and



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opportunism, but the broad lines into which they have resolved themselves to-day bear all the earmarks of conceded privileges, which the financial consortium divided up at its council tables in Peking. Their group achievements were even more impressive. The four-power railroads concentrating on Hankow comprise a typical instance of joint control, a rather amusing instance now, in that the German section can be appropriated by its French and British co-promoters, while the Americans look on in China, as in the western world, as helpless neutrals.

This condition reached its high-water mark in those days of anarchy and disintegration immediately following the forced passage of the five-power loan at the end of April, 1913, when a large part of the South, led by most of the men who had been prominent in the



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first revolution, definitely broke their allegiance with President Yuan Shih-k'ai's government. I was in Peking just after this loan was passed, and I tell elsewhere how the Southern leaders began there and then their desperate and futile fight. I traveled south, finding rumors of an impending rebellion more and more insistent and circumstantial; and the very night that rebellion broke out in the middle Yang-tse provinces I was with Dr. Sun Yat-sen at the offices of his railway administration at Shanghai. I can say confidently that the second revolution had as one of its most wide-spread and influential causes the apprehension of this very debt commission. The strain of sansculottism in the first revolution, which had much cleverer and more responsible leaders than it has ever been given credit for, revolted at the idea not so much that



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Yuan Shih-k'ai was seizing the country for his own purposes, but that he was seizing it for the foreigner's purposes. Envy and constitutional futility submerged this idea later beneath empty personal vituperations against the president; but although the vituperations were excessive and unjust, the president has never altogether lived down the original apprehension. Surely the enormous burst of foreign railway and commercial concessions following the crushing of the Southern party—nearly five thousand miles of new railway lines being conceded, for instance, in a little over a year to enterprises beyond direct Chinese control—has not tended to restore confidence among the exiled revolutionaries that their apprehensions were unfounded.

The opportunity for a debt commission reached its high-water mark, how-




ever, in this stormy and rancorous period; since then, by an unforeseen combination of circumstances, it has steadily and surely receded. The most unforeseen of all these circumstances is the one I mentioned at the beginning of the chapter: it is that China has begun to pull herself together. The old leisurely method of weakening China by taking things from her bit by bit, justifying each step by international coöperation and agreement, was already disappearing from the scroll of things that are before the European War. That terrible event left only the framework of a Consortium; its vitality has been weakened for years to come, just as the brain is weakened when the blood flows to aid the digestion after a dull dinner; urgent elementals demand overwhelming consideration elsewhere.

Even had there been no war, however,




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the effect of the new spirit of Chinese solidarity would still have shifted things through its own momentum alone. That is the great lesson in the present stage of China's crisis. The reconstruction in a political sense has been in some respects extremely disappointing; especially so is the concentration of great power in the hands of the President, whose personal influence has been so profound that his removal would now be a very grave destruction of balance indeed. But the financial reconstruction which has been guided—and here is a case where a genuine tribute must be paid to Yuan Shih-k'ai—by a group of the ablest and most progressive minds in modern China, has been impressive. A whole category of new taxes has been ably and most successfully imposed, a success in which the patriotism of the people has played a



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part unique in humdrum financial history. China has imposed and collected such modern imposts as a marriage tax, an income tax, an inheritance tax, and a tax on title-deeds; she has drawn excise from luxuries, such as wine and tobacco; and she has put two national banks, the Bank of China and the Bank of Communications, on a broad and responsible foundation that those who have dreaded the nightmare of her bankruptcy would never have believed conceivable. The result has been not only a year of solvency, but the general confidence that the grip thus attained will be held with an increasing margin in the heavy years of amortization that are to come. The Government has spread this confidence by a series of wise and liberal redemptions of its obligations of the immediate and stormy past. Five million dollars' worth of



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the worthless paper notes of the Revolution were bought back in 1914 in the big commercial province of Kwangtung; in Szechuen, at the other end of southern China, \$2,250,000 worth of the military bonds of the Nanking government were redeemed and publicly burned at a patriotic celebration. And on February 20, 1915, in Peking, amid a band concert and many speeches, and not without fireworks in the evening, a drawing took place of over half a million dollars' worth of these notes in a single day, the holders of which were given the characteristic square deal of China in a manner that offered the convincing evidence of hard cash to the most impenetrable of skeptics.*

* It is now known that for the year 1915 China again made both ends meet with a substantial balance to her credit. The customs receipts for the month of January, the best index to China's trade conditions,



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The political meaning of this new consolidation of the best forces in China is clear: it is that if China had only to face the old menace of international attrition, she really has now a basis to start on a program which could be called without absurd optimism a campaign of rights-recovery. Already her financial masters are yielding to the pressure, as well as to their own common sense. It needed only a firm Anglo-American

show an increase over last year. The reorganized Salt Taxes, which yielded \$6,000,000 in 1913, and rose to \$29,000,000 in 1914, went up in 1915 well over \$30,000,000. The flourishing state of China's government railways is shown by the fact that the Peking-Mukden, Peking-Kalgan, and Peking-Hankow lines, besides accounting for steady progress in new construction beyond Kalgan, produced between them a net revenue to the state of over \$6,000,000. Agricultural experimentation is being carried on on a large scale, particularly in the tea and silk industries, to the latter of which \$10,000,000 was contributed by the government during the early part of the European War for the relief of the silk filatures. Finally Chinese Government bonds are still quoted, as they have been for some years past, at a higher rate than those of Japan.

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protest to cut down the revolutionary indemnities from twenty-odd millions claimed to barely three millions recognized, which only at best is something like a just estimate of the foreign property destroyed in the Revolution.

It is in the perspective of this reconstruction and this hopefulness that we have to face the deep-lying peril of the Japanese ultimatum of last year. What does it mean to China? The Japanese claim that the demands it forced through, as well as those it allowed to be postponed, do not in any way jeopardize the integrity or the independence of China. China takes a different view. She lives in mortal apprehension. Liang Chi-ch'iao puts her case bluntly when he says: "The guilt of Belgium is that she failed to follow the example of Luxemburg; the guilt of China is that she has failed to follow




the example of Korea. . . .” It is a political *impassé* characteristically Eastern when a high Chinese minister replies in words such as these to an adversary which has placed on record this assurance from Count Okuma: “As Premier of Japan, I have stated, and I now again state to the people of America and of the world, that Japan has no ulterior motive, no desire to secure more territory, no thought of depriving China or other peoples of anything they possess.”

It is obvious, in spite of anything Count Okuma may say, that Japan *has* made a very decisive forward movement. Nevertheless, before we take up the conditions of that advance, let us chasten ourselves with this honest admission: that whatever may be its cause and whatever its objective, it has a dozen perfectly plausible justifications



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in point of its simple emulation of the recognized European procedure toward China during the last fifteen years. Is the Japanese conference at Peking in respect to Manchuria really vitally different from the recent British-Chinese conference at Darjiling to secure the isolation of Tibet, or from the Russo-Chinese conference at Kiakhta to confirm the Russification of Mongolia? On the surface it is not vitally different either from these or from the German seizure of Kiaochow or the no less flagrant French appropriation of Annam and Tongking. More than this, it appears to be the perfectly legitimate attempt of a strong Asiatic power to protect a weak one against the further depredations which experience shows must still be expected from the greedy powers of Europe. The argument of the necessary expansion of Japan for pur-



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poses of colonization and trade is also perfectly plausible and legitimate. Why do we find, then, this stubborn, nay, desperate opposition of China to a kindred power which comes with such friendly words and such finite pledges of innocuousness? Why are the ordinary run of the Chinese people so profoundly moved that in a single week of February, 1915, as many as twenty-five hundred telegrams were received by the Government in Peking from hundreds of provincial towns and small villages in every part of the republic, urging China to put the last ounce of her energy into withstanding the demands of Japan?

The reason is to be found in the demands themselves. Let us have clearly in mind just what these demands were; which of them have perforce been granted, and which have been postponed. This was no accidental di-

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vision—in her ultimatum of May 7, 1915, Japan threatened China with war unless the first four groups of her demands were accepted as they stood. The fifth and last group was “postponed.” The first four groups gave Japan the following concessions:


In South Manchuria and Eastern Mongolia the Japanese won the privileges, which no other foreign nation enjoys, of leasing and owning land, of free and unrestricted travel and residence and commerce; as well as the rights of exclusively working practically all valuable mining sites, of control of all loans for general development (with the shadowy exception that the Chinese might still raise money among themselves for special purposes), and of control of all new railway enterprises. Add to these the renewal of the Port Arthur lease for



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99 years, and the lease of the important Kirin-Changchun Railway for the same period (the South Manchuria system went with Port Arthur), and the powerful advantages reaped by Japan in this field alone become obvious.

In Shantung, for the trouble and pains of capturing Tsingtao, the Japanese claimed and received all the German prerogatives in the Kiaochow sphere and in the great province of Shantung as well. She secured a pledge that no harbor or island on this coast would be alienated from Chinese control. She won the right to build a very important strategic railway from Lungkow (where by a curious coincidence the Japanese landed) to a junction with the German railway. And for all this she merely promised to give Tsingtao back to China *when the war was over*, establishing her own position




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there meanwhile by securing China's promise of a Japanese concession "at a place to be designated by the Japanese Government."

In the case of the Hanyehping Coal and Iron Company, China's greatest manufacturing corporation, China was obliged to promise that "in view of the intimate relations between Japanese capitalists and this enterprise," no action tending to confiscate this company, nor to convert it into a state enterprise, nor to cause it to borrow or to use capital other than Japanese would be permitted.


In the case of Fukien, the coast province opposite the Japanese island of Formosa (a war spoil of 1895), China pledged herself not to allow foreign nations to construct harbors, docks, coal-ing stations, or anything approaching a naval base—or to borrow money



abroad to accomplish such purposes herself.

Finally, China engaged herself not to alienate or lease from her power any islands, harbors, or strips of territory along her coast.

This is what Japan actually got. How much higher she aimed is obvious from a brief consideration of the fifth group she was obliged to postpone. This included a proposal that a large proportion of her arms and ammunition must be made by Japan, either in Chinese factories under Japanese control or by purchase from Japan herself. Another proposal suggested that China employ Japanese "advisers" in high positions at Peking. Another demanded land-owning privileges for schools and hospitals in the interior; and another brought forward the project so profitably exploited in Korea, the



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propagation of Buddhism by Japanese throughout China. Joint control of the police in "certain sections" and a sphere of interest in Fukien were added to the list, and last and most amazing of all, the right to build a rail from Kiukiang on the Yang-tse up to Wuchang opposite Hankow and down to Hangchow and Swatow (presumably) on the coast opposite Formosa. This latter project cut through the heart of the oldest British sphere of interest in China, and did as much as anything toward rousing the bitter resentment with which these demands were regarded from the beginning by all Englishmen in the Orient.

How any statesman, even an Oriental statesman, can soberly consider these demands, and then tell us that they take nothing away from China which was hers before, must come as a shock to

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friends both of China and Japan. It is refreshing to note that the majority of Japanese agree with apologists like Dr. Iyenaga, the responsible and respected chief of the Japanese press bureau in New York, who says in defending Japan's procedure that her recent achievements merit her a "place in the sun." That is a proper defense, and it places Japanese psychology in perfectly correct accord with a certain psychology now prevalent in Europe, on which we have fairly well made up our minds.

The blunt truth is that these demands strike at the heart of China's sovereignty. Japan tells us this is not so; but the world has not forgotten that Japan said precisely the same thing in the Korean business. We are coming to learn only slowly in America that it is not necessary to be a jingoist to sus-



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pect Japanese foreign policy of utter unscrupulousness. From the start, the negotiations with China which ended with the Ultimatum of May, 1915, were marked with a lack of good faith which led many an American in the Far East to a total change of mind about Japan. She denied that there were any negotiations at all until China's repeated and desperate appeals for understanding and assistance made further concealment impossible. Japanese leaders as high-placed as Count Okuma resorted to a campaign of smooth phrases in this country and Europe (I quote the phrases above from the *Independent*) definitely intended to mislead friends of China. This seems a strong indictment, and I wish I had the space to prove at length, by the testimony of the available printed documents, what so many of the readers of this book may



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still be inclined to doubt. I can only submit the following very typical comparison, however, between what Count Okuma said, and what Japan demanded, and demanded to his knowledge and at his direction as Imperial Prime Minister and Chief Executive:

Count Okuma, through the Koksai (Official) News Agency, Apr. 3, 1915:

"Japan has not demanded the appointment of Japanese advisers."

Japanese Government's communiqué of May 7, giving demands presented on Jan. 18:

"The Central Chinese Government must engage influential Japanese as political, military, and financial advisers."


Could witness of unscrupulous policy be plainer than that?

Count Okuma also stated that Japan wanted joint police control only in certain specified areas in South Manchuria (bad enough!); whereas the control at first demanded *specified no limits*. He took the meanest of diplomatic advantages—he kept the truth secret, and then mis-stated it semi-of-

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ficially. And while the whole Chinese nation was aflame with the desperate danger of the situation, he was telling the world (in the same despatch, sent abroad by Reuter) that "misinformation had been scattered broadcast largely by German interests, and *this has given agitators in China an opportunity.*" He dismissed all this amazing list of aggressions with a phrase: they largely consisted in an endeavor to settle some "questions"—by implication, of little importance—"of long standing, some since the Russo-Japanese War." "When the final disclosures are made," he concluded, "it will be found that the whole situation has been grossly exaggerated."

They *have* been made, and we can see now, considering the record of her adversary in Korea, how bold and unscrupulous a stroke China had reason




to fear—and has reason still. Indeed, the procedure of Japan in China, from the direct parallel in the demand to propagate Buddhism in a country already powerfully Buddhist, to the shrewd diplomacy which divides and stultifies the victim's friends with half-truths, bears in a hundred ways a fatal resemblance to the procedure we have already seen carried through in Korea. But that does not say, however, that the Chinese will, by illusory promises or by bullying aggression, be brought to any such humiliating conclusion. The situation is not yet nearly so desperate. With the granting of her demands the hegemony of the Far East unquestionably has passed into Japan's hands. Beside the Koreans, the Chinese are a nation of indestructible hardihood, and were experienced in the art of governing themselves and of absorbing within

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their vast extent conqueror after conqueror long before the Japanese emerged from a state of tribalism. But it *is* desperate enough to oblige us to follow step by step, with unwinking eyes toward the future, the clues to Japan's hoped-for powers that we can trace in the region where she has power already compassed and completed: in Manchuria. And with the sincerest respect in the world it must be said that we have only learned from her activities in Manchuria to fear the monopoly in fact, if not in form, which she clearly proposes to set up ultimately over China as a whole.

A word on the special incident of Japanese control in Manchuria is thus extremely relevant to our apprehensions. "There is absolutely no doubt that in Southern Manchuria," said our late Minister Rockhill in his



famous last speech of November 12, 1914, "British and American trade have been steadily declining ever since that part of China passed under Japanese control; nor is there any doubt that it has been driven out in a great part by Japanese competition, supported by preferential customs and railway rates, shipping bounties, and successful resistance to paying China's internal taxes." Thus also the American Association of China in its report for 1914: "Japanese methods constitute a most serious violation of the open-door principle. . . . Competition takes the form of a system of rebates, not only in freight and steamer rates, but in remission of duties and charges which are assessed against all other nations."


In other words, special favors intangible in legal terms, but all powerful in practical business operations, follow the

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Japanese flag with as deliberate an intention of making foreign trade impossible as was the persistent intention of General Nogi to make live Russians impossible in certain sections of Manchuria.

This was the condition before the Ultimatum of last year. What it is to be in the future we can only realize by grasping the current understanding of all students of the diplomacy of the Far East: namely; that, under the new provisions, South Manchuria and Eastern Mongolia have acquired a Japanese character and prerogative that no foreign power will be disposed to question without counting the cost.

The same procedure, on a smaller scale, is already being rapidly re-enacted at Tsingtao, and wherever else the Japanese spread their influence through Shantung. Everywhere the




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prerogatives of the Germans are being increased and accentuated. Where the Germans used Chinese currency and the Chinese language, their rivals have rigidly insisted on Japanese. The German-Chinese railroad, with fewer than a hundred German employees and the rest Chinese, has been entirely manned by Japanese from the South Manchurian system. The Japanese first insisted on a customs' collector at Tsingtao arbitrarily appointed from Tokio, and consented to follow the German precedent and work under Peking only after a wholesale concession in the proportion of Japanese officials in the territory they have appropriated in Shantung.

Such are examples of the drift of affairs by which we may judge the imminence and urgency of China's peril. The Japanese have the unfailing capacity of never removing their foot

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once they have set it down on a desirable location for national progress. Their present determination is undoubtedly the most serious menace imaginable to the continuance of that solidarity which China within recent years has struggled desperately to make good. The old vision of clutching hands again comes vividly to her mind. Despite Japan's promises and protestations, China justly regards her interference with distrust and consternation. China is a nation whose potentialities for peace are impressive and profound, if she is allowed to work out her destiny by herself. But China weak, humiliated, and overrun with foreign aggression may become the battlefield of a war beside which even the present conflict may be insignificant. To the interests of fair play for China is thus joined the universal interest of



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peace, and both are bound up, for ourselves and for the rest of the world, in the preservation at all costs of the integrity of the Chinese nation against whosoever shall assail it.

VII


THE FUTURE

I HAVE endeavored in this little book to do two things: first, to bring home to Western readers a series of direct impressions of present-day China, impressions which I hope will bring home to the imagination something of the quality of mind under which that country is now going forward; and second, to set forth, in a few broad strokes of general policy, the stirring and complicated series of crises which constitute its immediate historical background.

Unquestionably, as I hope has been made clear, the political future of China

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is conditioned by Japan—and the restraints put on Japan by the major European powers—and by ourselves. But the future of China as conditioned by itself depends more essentially than on any other single factor on the economic progress of the Chinese people. The pressure of persistent civic instability during the Revolution prevented this subject from being even considered, much less constructively thought out, throughout the early Republican period. The pressure of the threatened foreign aggression from Japan to-day makes it almost as equally remote from the practical consideration of the best minds of the nation. But the time is destined to come, and the settlement following the European war may clear the ground for it sooner than many of us expect, when the economic and industrial potentialities of the



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Chinese people will begin to figure definitely in the grand strategy of world power.

The heart of a nation's industrial life rests on its railways. If China had the power to build up a great railway system suited solely to the needs of her economic and commercial development, if she herself could plan to tap her enormous material resources on some great, constructive plan based on her own interests, and only incidentally on the interests of her exploiting customers, there would be no "problem" of Chinese railway development. But that is not the way potentially rich, but politically weak and indigent nations are treated in this capitalistic world. The Chinese railway situation is to-day the essential barometer, locally and nationally, of foreign control. And the extent of that control may be learned at once by





"The Rocket of China" (1881), made of scrap iron



**The Peking-Hankow Limited Flyer (1916)
THE OLD AND THE NEW IN LOCOMOTIVES**



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a glance at the ownership and management of China's existing 15,000 miles of railways, built, building, and contracted for.

The figures of this table are approximate, but they disclose in a manner which needs no further comment the extent to which China is mistress in her own house in the factor which is the absolute *sine qua non* of her industrial development:

	<i>Capital</i>	<i>Miles Con- structed</i>	<i>Building or Contracted for</i>
* Under Complete			
Foreign Man- agement	\$330,000,000	2470	1300
Under Foreign			
Control	400,000,000	1568	6900
Under Chinese			
Control	128,000,000	1895	361
Totals	\$858,000,000	5933	9561


In other words, out of 15,494 miles of railway, built, building, or author-

* Based on the China Year Book.

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ized, amounting in capital to \$858,000,000, China herself controls less than 2000 miles of road, or one seventh of the total, and \$128,000,000 of capital investment, or less than one sixth of the total.

China, it should be noticed, also stands in a great deal better position to-day than she will stand as the building program of 9561 miles goes forward; for the new construction is overwhelmingly under foreign control. This fundamental point should, then, be got into the mind first; that the railways of China are bound to be in the main, so far as the immediate future is concerned, stakes of foreign interest. And this foreign interest, whether it be reasonably generous toward Chinese sovereignty, as in the case of the terms of the Tientsin-Pukow line, or whether it insists on absolute foreign control, as



in the case of the Shanghai-Nanking Railway, reserves an ultimate power in the hands of the lending persons which inevitably comes to be regarded in the diplomatic and political world as a powerful and negotiable asset.

The second point to understand is that it is by the strategic configuration of these railways that the "spheres of interest" which have long since nullified, or rather prevented the establishment (for there never was such a thing) of the Open Door, take on their definite character. I have worked out the way that these railroads are apportioned among the nations, basing my figures on estimates from the latest "China Year Book" (1914), and on subsequent and private information, somewhat as follows:

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	<i>Capital</i>	<i>Miles Con- structed</i>	<i>Building or Contracted for</i>
England	\$140,000,000	845	3000
Germany *	80,000,000	732	900
Belgium	115,000,000	291	2500
Russia	200,000,000	1100
Japan	125,000,000	780	1200
France	62,500,000	290	1300
U. S. A. (share of four-power loan)	7,500,000	300
China	128,000,000	1895	361
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$858,000,000	5933	9561


To any one who seeks possible causes for another world war, this table showing the mixed and competing foreign control of China's railway systems is by no means a merely academic piece of figuring. The control of the Baghdad Railway is one of the capital issues of the present war; the control of the South Manchurian Railway was as valuable and much desired a prize to Japan as the free hand in Korea, over

* Before the War.

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which she ostensibly threw herself into the war with Russia. In the present balance of power among China's railway concessions, there are situations quite as delicate, and vast prizes of industrial conquest and development quite as decisive in their strategic importance as any for which the greatest wars have been waged in the past.


Take, for example, the single instance of the concessions held by Belgium, which I have mentioned several times in this book, and which I particularly emphasized in the previous chapter. If there is any romance in railway promotion, the achievements of the little group of Belgians who carried off in 1912 and 1913 the two greatest railway concessions that have so far been at stake in China, constitute without any stretch of language one of the most romantic business operations of the



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modern world. The projects for which they were then conceded the full rights by the Chinese government cut China from north to south and from east to west along lines whose immeasurable strategic importance has not yet been adequately realized.


The principal concession, named from its connections the Lung-Tsing-U-Hai scheme, proposes to run from an outlet on the sea not yet settled something like fifteen hundred miles into the far interior of China. It is not a mere paper project; one of its most vital links, that between China's ancient capital, Kaifeng, and the Honan provincial capital, Honanfu, has been in profitable operation since 1908. From the Chinese point of view its object is obscure, but from another point of view it is plain as day. After leaving the city of Sianfu it strikes off into the sparsely



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settled deserts and arid lands of Kansu toward Suchow, a long extension into the outer wilderness which seems inexplicable in view of the still urgent need for railroad consolidation within the eighteen provinces of China proper. Light appears, however, when you remember at whom this long finger is pointing. It is at Russia, whose trans-Caspian railways have already crept up to the other side of this great hinterland. Long ago Russia mapped out the broad lines of a railway which would penetrate the heart of China should the Japanese wrest from them the connecting links in South Manchuria of the trans-Siberian; and strange to say, the great Belgian concession matches their route almost mile for mile.

The other Belgian concession is, if anything, even more impressive; for it introduces France as the active partner



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of Russia in using Belgian cat's-paws. It is a north-and-south railroad, running through the great anthracite coal province of Shansi, and with the specially granted right of a southerly extension to the Szechwan city of Chengtu, on the Yang-tse River. Now, Chengtu happens also to be the northern terminus of the great French-conceded railroad running north from the heart of the French sphere of interest at Yunnanfu, a road, which, during its latter stages is the French section of the Hankow-Szechwan trunk line. Broadly speaking, the junction of these two schemes opens up a clear way for the French through the rich, back-country provinces of China—to what? The northerly extension of the Belgian project, also specially provided for, is Kweihwachen, a frontier city, outside the Wall, on the borders of the Gobi



Desert of Mongolia. A railway is already crawling up in this direction from Peking, under Chinese government control, the famous Peking-Kalgan line, a line which is, by the way, although entirely in Chinese hands, the most creditable piece of railroad construction and administration in China.


This railhead-to-be, then, at Kweih-wachen—whom does it face? Who controls Mongolia; who has already surveyed a line to Urga; who, indeed, has had a fixed policy ever since the completion of the trans-Siberian of aiming for a short cut to Peking that would keep out of range of the Japanese? Who but Russia, seeking again the road to empire from which she has been thrust back by England at the gates of India and whipped back by Japan from Manchuria and Korea?

Add to this the French invasion of



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the West River territory by the railway announced on February 18, 1914 (Yunnanfu-Nanning-Yamchow), a territory which the British had hoped and still hope to open up for themselves, and it becomes plainly apparent that the competition against England on the part of France and Russia is bound to proceed to proportions of no less than continental magnitude. Roughly speaking, the 1914 concessions of Great Britain complete for her the practical control of the great triangular area between Shanghai, Hankow, and Canton, from the Yang-tse Basin south. The Belgian trans-continental railway enters the Yang-tse Basin on the north; at any rate it is hard to conceive that it will keep out of this territory, for possible outlets on the sea are limited as to commercial opportunities, and there is hardly a terminus



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that could be chosen that would not create a fundamental rivalry with the deeply entrenched British interests already on the ground. There is absolutely no dodging the issue that if the Belgian projects mean anything at all, they mean to fix the pivot of a rivalry between Russia and France on the one hand and Great Britain on the other that may have far-reaching consequences, even after the settlement of this war.

This instance of the railroad situation may be repeated in the case of almost every great commercial potentiality in China. It is a railway from Kiu-kiang, on the Yang-tse, down to Swatow in Fukien Province, that still hangs as a smoldering issue between England and Japan; Japan amazed the world by boldly demanding it from China in the never-to-be-forgotten se-




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ries of demands of the spring of 1915, seemingly oblivious to the fact that it cuts across territory that has been the one really acknowledged British sphere of interest in all China.


It is repeated in the vast Tayeh iron mines of the south Yang-tse valley, which the covetousness of Japan may yet make a first-class diplomatic issue, along with the great Hanyehping steel plant of Hanyang. America, in the name of self-accredited missionaries of the Standard Oil Company, has made a striking bid for the control of China's vast oil fields, which, though it has received a temporary check, has given that far-seeing company first innings in what is admitted to be the greatest undeveloped oil-field of the known world.

A book could be written on the manufacturing field alone, particularly on the most extensive and characteristic of



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all its manifestations so far in China, in the cotton mills. The center of the cotton industry is at Shanghai, mainly in English, Japanese, and Chinese hands; it enjoys there the privilege of a practically unrestricted exploitation of labor, maintaining conditions which were described at this year's Nurses' Congress at Shanghai as "a disgrace to civilization." It offers the greatest field for social reform outside of Japan. I must be content, however, with stating the principle which this irresistible development is more and more forcefully expressing. That is, that this vast reservoir of economic power, the greatest that has been opened up to the world in modern times, constitutes for us of the Western world a menace that the European war has only taught us dimly to foresee. The struggle for the control of this power



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has only been suspended during the war; it will inevitably be resumed. And if contemporary statesmen are looking for issues on which the oft-repeated prediction—that if the Allies win this war, they will only fall out among themselves—may be fulfilled, the danger portents on the tightening lines of competition for power in the Far East are only too apparent.

We Americans look across the sea at this harassed nation full of such great and such terrible possibilities for the immediate future of the world, with mingled feelings. There is a terror in the present circumstances of our war-worn time, so pressing and so near that we cannot feel the possibility of still greater dangers preparing on the same lines as the present conflict, based on the same competition for markets, the same world-end international ri-



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valry, in a world that can apparently learn no lessons from its own history. We are also obsessed with a danger of our own, a gathering misunderstanding and bad feeling with Japan, that will take the most delicate judgment and the most conciliatory spirit possible to both nations to allay.

But so far as we can with a just regard for our own destiny stand for a foreign policy based on conditions outside our own country, we should guard and guard jealously whatever opportunities we have of aiding in the consolidation of China—the only possible and the only courageous policy which can in any way minimize the danger of a world war with this nation's economic power as its stake. China's future is not yet merely a Japanese question, but we can only prevent its becoming a Japanese question by making it a world

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question. What has followed the partition of Turkey has shown clearly what would in even greater degree follow either the partition of China, its absorption or control by one power, or any other eventuality permanently disturbing the balance of power in the Far East. The weakness of Turkey has been a European policy; and after half a century of lying settlements, and an enfeebling diplomacy which is self-condemned in the word it has given to the world—Turkification—that long plundered land has been revenged on its plunderers by being one of the primary causes of the greatest war civilization has ever seen. Let us recognize in time the application of this portent to China. There is only one secure, there is only one honorable, there is only one American conclusion: The upbuilding of China is vital to the peace of the world.



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